

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

AL 414.8.451



HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY



COMMODORE PERRY'S JAPAN EXPEDITION.

D. APPLETON & CO.,

346 & 348 BROADWAY, NEW YORK,

HAVE JUST PUBLISHED,

Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas & Japan,

Performed in the Years 1852, 1853, and 1854,

By order of the Government of the United States, under the Command of Commodore M. C. Perry, U. S. N.

Compiled from the Original Notes and Journals of Commodore Perry,

AT HIS REQUEST, AND UNDER HIS SUPERVISION,

BY FRANCIS L. HAWKS, D.D.

ONE VOLUME 8vo., WITH TWO HUNDRED ENGRAVINGS AND CHARTS.

Price in Cloth, extra. $5 00	Price in Full Calf,.....$7 00
" Half Morocco or Calf, 6 00	" " Morocco, ... 8 00

From the North American Review.

"A threefold interest attaches to this work. It claims emphatic notice as a record of national enterprise; it forms an important chapter of our diplomatic history; and it is permanently attractive as an embodiment of scientific facts. With such a degree and kind of interest as the basis of a new contribution to the honorable archives of American exploration, we cannot but congratulate the large number of readers, who, loosed by one or another of the special claims we have designated, will eagerly peruse this elegant publication, prepared, as it has been, with so eminent care, judgment and skill."

From the N. Y. Daily Times.

"Rarely has a Narrative appeared so intelligible in all points. There can be no mistake, from first to last, as to the meaning of a single sentence. Every thing is definite and intelligible. The book has all the interest of romantic fiction, combined with the effect of incidents of actual occurrence and great novelty."

From the Boston Post.

"Without abating one jot of self-respect, or employing one particle of humbug, the American Commodore did with Japan what no one else had done before. He and his officers were straightforward and courteous in all their dealings with the Japanese, and the digest of their reports and other documents attests their intelligence and education, and thereby does honor to the country of which they were, in the sight of the world, the able and successful representatives."

From the Boston Journal.

"It is a book which, taken as a whole, will give much pleasure and satisfaction, and, being copiously illustrated with maps and engravings, will cultivate the acquaintance of the public with the geography and inhabitants of the Japanese Archipelago."

From the Evening Post.

"The negotiations of the Commodore with the Japanese present a new plan of diplomacy, and the book abounds with notices, throwing light on the social and moral character of the Japanese, and their political and religious institutions. There were skilful artists accompanying the expedition, and the illustrations are by no means the least interesting part of the book."

From the Portland Christian Mirror.

"The general reader, as well as the diplomat and naturalist, will be both interested and instructed in matters of social economy, in diplomacy, and in science."







SMILES AND FROWNS.



SMILES AND FROWNS.

BY

SARA A. WENTZ.

"O, weary hearts! O, slumbering eyes!
O, drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!"

LONGFELLOW.

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,
346 & 348 BROADWAY.
1857.

AL 4148.451

~~AL 4148.8185~~

1861 Sept 25
No. 6 of
Bowen Stanley, Mrs. [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by
D. APPLETON & CO.,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY



TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER,

WHO HAVE BLESSED ME FROM INFANCY;

WHOSE TEACHINGS, IF OBEYED,

WILL BLESS ME

THROUGHOUT ETERNITY.

SARA A. WENTZ.



SMILES AND FROWNS.

CHAPTER I.

The room had a lonely look. I left my seat by the little dressing-table, where I had been for the last hour, with my face buried in my arms, the while dreary pictures had been drifting before me. I went to one of the dormer windows and looked out, hoping the outward view would tend to dispel my homesick anguish. How different were the small city yards upon which I gazed, from the green undulating meadows and orchards that surrounded the home that was now lost to me for ever. I had longed to see more of the world than my grandmother's cottage life permitted; bright cheery scenes had ever shifted in the distance. That distance was now reached, that wonderful world was now entered: the old experiences were all passed; the fond, aged face of my best friend had passed from mortal sight, and was beaming youthfully among angels. I stood upon the threshold of existence, not with eager arms outstretched to the future, but shrinking back with sorrowful timidity, endeavoring to clasp the sweetnesses of retreating childhood.

"Standing with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!"

I looked down upon the tiny spot of earth belonging to the house; two flourishing trees grew there, and a grape-vine clung to a latticed trellis; a solitary bird perched itself upon a swaying stem of the vine, too timorous to sing so far from home. Flower-beds were ranged on each side of the yard by the fence, but the plants looked weak and drooping for want of sufficient sunshine,—a portion of the original grass-plot was partitioned off with a row of box, and devoted to Flora; under the more lavish sunlight, the flowers planted here threw a cheerful glow over the whole yard by their gay and graceful presence. A dull quiet was in the house. In my distant upper room I could hear no voices, no busy steps, no sounds of family life.

For the first time since I had entered it, I looked observantly around the chamber which had been assigned to me; it was a large, old-fashioned room: evidently it had been occupied by some one, for a dozen books and a small rosewood box on the table seemed in familiar use, from their half-worn appearance: within the books were fugitive bits of paper, with sweet poems printed thereon. Upon the fly-leaf of several of the books the name of "Grace Percival" was delicately traced: once, when a child, my cousin Grace had spent a few days at our cottage; then she was lovely and kind, but as she was three years my senior, I had not felt quite at home with her. She had lived in this house with her sister ever since the latter's marriage: I wondered where she was now: Cousin Mary had not mentioned her to me, while we talked below stairs.

I had been under the roof little more than an hour, and yet it seemed very long since I had looked with trembling heart from the carriage-window, as the vehicle stopped before the staid red brick-house; apparently no one heard it rumble over the stones, and then stop, for no cordial face hastened to the door: I paused a moment before lifting the brass knocker.

A smiling black girl opened the door for me, and ushered me into the parlor: as she returned towards the kitchen, I heard a small ebony boy, who had been peeping from the head of the stairs, whisper, "Is that *her?*"

I was left alone a few moments to await the entrance of Cousin Mary Rodman, of whom I had little knowledge. I looked about the old-fashioned parlor to see if I could glean any idea of her habits. There were no graceful trifles; every thing was exceedingly neat; the mahogany table with slender legs stood below the gilt-framed looking-glass, and held a large Family Bible, with a few late works by choice authors: in one corner was a polished mahogany stand, with its top standing up in a perpendicular position, like a shield; finely carved chairs and sofa, and an ancient piano completed the furniture.

At length Cousin Mary came in with both hands outstretched, and with a kind smile on her countenance. She kissed me; she did not know that her welcome went like sunshine into my fearful heart.

"And this is our Cousin Kate!" she said; "I am so glad that you accepted my invitation to make this your home."

"I should have been utterly homeless without your invitation!" I answered, striving to keep back the tears, and the rising of my heart. My grandmother was a great-aunt of Mrs. Rodman's by marriage only; our families had never been intimate since my grandfather's death, many years previous: I had been left an orphan in infancy. When Cousin Mary heard, to her great surprise, that grandmother had lost the little property she possessed, and that the blow had snapt the thread of her feeble existence, she had written to me immediately, begging me in most cordial terms to come to her home.

When Mrs. Rodman ceased speaking, I saw that the

warmth and brightness of her face had all vanished with her brilliant smile: the face which I remembered was rosy, animated, and joyous; the face before me was a repressed one, almost severe in its calmness; her clear black eyes, firm mouth, and straight black hair, plainly parted on her brow, tinged my ardent gratitude suddenly with a respectful awe—with a fear lest I should never be able to reach her standard of duty. I knew not then that she was severe with herself and merciful to others.

Cousin," she said, after a few moments' consideration, "shall I take you to your room? I am teaching Sally to make a fruit-cake, and it remains *in statu quo* while I am here. Perhaps you would like to rest after your journey. We shall not have tea until seven o'clock."

"I followed her up stairs. When with a cheerful word she closed the door of my room behind her, and went away, a thousand feelings rushed over me: I felt more lonely than when I had stood above a late new-made grave. It was so desolate to see following me no longer the indulgent eyes which had from babyhood beamed on me with the pride of love. I thought of the village church and the smiling "good-bye," as I sallied forth to Sunday-school on a summer morning, and looked back to see grandmother standing in the porch, with one hand shading her eyes. It seemed to me, as I stood in the centre of the room, with clasped hands and slowly coming tears, that I had lost that which the whole world, and all the glory of it, could never buy me—*maternal love*. In my little cottage home all my thoughts had been responded to with interest, all my fancies and wishes had been fondly consulted: henceforth it would not be so!

My trunk had been sent up to my room. I essayed to unpack it, but desisted with a miserable pang; it was breaking the last tie that bound me to the unreturning past. I returned again to the window: dark clouds had overcast the

heavens, shutting away the sunshine; anon a silver light rose from about the horizon, and slowly glided up the sky, but soon the black clouds of the zenith spread themselves abroad to absorb it, and a gray dismal shroud came down close upon the houses, drearily shading all things. Then the rain descended in fitful dashes.

I heard a step upon the stairs, and strove to assume a cheerful look. Cousin Mary came into my room, saying, "Would you like to come down stairs now, cousin? it seems so dark and dreary. I fear you will get homesick."

She must have seen that I had been weeping, but she made no comment upon it. I followed her silently. When we were seated in the parlor, she handed me a book, asking, "Are you fond of reading, dear?"

"I am very fond of it," I returned, glad of the excuse to turn over the pages, and tear my thoughts from myself.

"Do you like to read aloud, Kate?" she inquired, after I had looked over the book.

"I am not in the habit of it," I responded, "and like most young girls, I read too fast."

"Will you read to me while I sew?"

I complied: ere an hour had gone by, we had paused to enter into a cordial discussion. I had never had an opportunity to mingle with cultivated persons, and Mrs. Rodman's interest in books charmed me. At home, grandmother had considered reading a wasteful occupation; therefore I had concealed much of my reading from her.

While we were talking, three gentlemen passed the window, and ascended the front porch. A timorous feeling took possession of me instantly. I recognized Mr. Rodman from his commanding height and general aspect. As he entered the room, he glanced at me, then inquiringly looked at his wife. She introduced me as "Cousin Kate Hamilton." He bowed politely but coldly, and did not offer to shake hands:

he merely asked if I had had an agreeable journey. He was a very handsome man, but he seemed puritanical and severe. His introduction was followed by that of two young men: they were clerks in his store. One of them, a Mr. Bedell, was embarrassed in the extreme: he was bashfulness personified: he was of an ungainly figure, with yellow hair and an enormous mouth; but when he had recovered from the effects of meeting a stranger, his blue eyes were full of energy and intelligence. The other young man, Mr. Gray, had a most attractive countenance, and brilliant observing eyes; a genial light played over his face when he smiled.

We immediately went to the dining-room to take tea. A constrained silence prevailed at the table; I sat in mortal terror lest I should drop my knife or upset my tea, for I had a perception that such faults would not be lightly regarded by Mr. Rodman.

Mr. Bedell at length passed the cake; as he did so, his elbow touched his teaspoon, and it flew on the floor; he set down the plate of cake, and stooped to pick it up, but his chin struck on the edge of a fresh cup of tea, without overturning it, however. He recovered his equilibrium with a flaming countenance, evidently unhappy at the recollection of his performance. Mr. Gray in vain endeavored to restrain his mirth; he left the table abruptly, seized his hat, and went out. The moment the door closed behind him we heard an explosion of laughter. Mr. Bedell's excessive gravity was too much for me. I strove to sip my tea,—I even pinched myself, but it would not do. I gave way, and laughed with my whole heart a moment, then solemnly addressed myself to my tea again. Cousin Mary smiled, Mr. Rodman looked stern, and Mr. Bedell took his leave. After he had gone, Cousin John Rodman said, addressing his wife,—

"I am surprised that Walter should have been so rude

as to have quitted the room. I cannot see that James's awkwardness offered any occasion for merriment."

"I can readily excuse any one for laughing at the scene," replied Cousin Mary, speaking with embarrassment, yet with a flash in her black eye, for his remark reflected upon me.

Her husband regarded her with a cold, sharp glance; it revealed his lack of conjugal tenderness; Mrs. Rodman seemed conscious of the look, although she drooped her eyes upon her plate. Her lips were very slightly pressed together, as if to keep them from quivering, and then the flush died away from her face, and her closed mouth softened in its expression, and settled into serenity. I felt how beautiful was the holiness in her soul, which could so soon dispel an impulse of passion.

"Grace and the children will return from the country next week," she said, looking at me. "They will make the house quite gay."

Here we arose from the table. Cousin John went to a stand, and looked among a quantity of papers with a dissatisfied look. "My morning's paper out of the way, as usual," he said.

"Oh, excuse me, John, here it is!" replied his wife, taking it from her work-basket. "I meant to have laid it back on the stand, and forgot it."

"Yes, you're pretty good at forgetting."

Again the pained flush returned to poor Cousin Mary's cheek. I felt that his words must cut with a keener edge in the presence of a stranger, and was about returning to my lonely room, when Cousin Mary said, "Won't you spend the evening down here, Kate?"

I went back, and sat down in the corner by her, mechanically taking up her work, and beginning to sew. Mr. Rodman left, which made me feel a little less constrained, yet did not remove the miserable feeling occasioned by discov-

ering that fate had cast me into a loveless home. Probably Cousin Mary had commenced life with overflowing hopes. I remembered well how she looked when standing at the altar beside her handsome husband. It was the first wedding I had ever attended, and being impressed with an idea that it was something very astonishing, mysterious and happy, I continually directed my eyes to the bride and groom. Her young face was lighted up with a rosy joy, which I shall never forget, young as I was at the time. And the same joy beamed in the face of the husband, which turned, and turned again to drink happiness and assurance from the blushing countenance of the bride. Why had all that love and joy faded? Was it in itself ephemeral; would it not stay with any of earth's children? or was there some defect in human hearts, which made them unable to hold affection in its warmest strength and purity? Why was it that when means of happiness were in reach of these two, they did not possess it? God once gave them a fresh gift in their love for each other! Whose fault was it that it had turned to anguish? Who was guilty? One, or both. My heart answered that Cousin Mary was least guilty, and that her innocence did not prevent her from being the most acute sufferer. I strove to shake off the many thoughts that pressed upon me in consequence of my new life. I tried to talk; so did Mrs. Rodman; but we were making a sad failure of it, when two visitors were announced. Their very faces seemed to brighten the atmosphere of the room; they looked so good and cordial. Cousin Mary rose quickly, and with her resplendent smile, gave both hands to one of the guests, the lady, saying, "I am so glad to see you—both of you!" and she extended one hand to the gentleman, with a frank, cheerful expression, that quite transformed her.

"Here is my new cousin, you see!" she said, turning to me, and introducing me to Miss Cardover and her brother.

The lady was apparently some years older than her companion, but her countenance was charming from its good sense, benevolence, and an expression not to be described; to look upon her was to feel that her inner life was strong, fresh and triumphant. We do not much think of this peculiarity on meeting others, unless we feel weak ourselves; then it sweeps into our consciousness and gives us courage. Mr. Cardover, who seemed a young man about twenty-seven, also had something of the same look, but in a less degree. He was not as handsome as his sister had been, but his dark gray eyes, and manly, assured voice, gave evidence that the outer temple would become of little consequence when the spirit was known.

Conversation became animated and agreeable. Cousin Mary seemed to have emerged from the quiet, self-restrained being she had appeared to me a moment since; she spoke of a book she had lately been reading, "Hyperion," and asked with glowing cheeks and earnest accent, "Is not that song of Lelis beautiful? Do you remember these words:—

'Who in life's battle firm doth stand,
Shall bear Hope's tender blossoms
Into the silent land.'"

"I do remember them!" returned Miss Cardover. "That single verse is a flower that perfumes my very life. How many such flowers we find as we travel on! They seem to spring up where we most desire them. I really think the older I grow," she continued, laughing, "that it is almost a satisfaction to get into trouble, for the sake of being helped out by some blessed words that shine into the heart, and light it up as it never was lighted before."

"Well! we'll endeavor to get you into trouble," said her brother, with a laughing glance. "When there is sunshine there never was any thing so delicious in sister Elizabeth's

remembrance, and when trials come, there never was any thing that could have happened so exquisitely adapted to do us good. So Mrs. Rodman, we are fairly outwitting the fates at our house."

"She has taught me a little of her philosophy," said Cousin Mary, with a grateful look at Miss Cardover. "But my nature often sets up a warfare against it; perhaps I shall come out right in the end." The smile with which this was said, was full of feeling. At this moment Cousin John, Mr. Bedell, and Walter Gray came in. The conversation took a totally different tone. Mrs. Rodman, although gentle and kind in manner, seemed to withdraw within herself. She had blossomed out, as it were, under the sunshine of cordial eyes and true hearts. She had been earnest and free, her face bright with expression. Now the glow rested on her cheek, but she simply strove to fill up pauses in the conversation. Mr. Rodman threw off the ungenial manner which had distinguished him at the tea-table. His remarks betrayed a mind enriched with information. I wondered if his mental riches were always reserved for those who would prize them less than his family; and if his smiles and kindness were always withheld from those only to whom they were life and air. I was attracted from observing him, by hearing Mr. Cardover say to Walter Gray,

"Nonsense! A young man of your age should overcome destiny, instead of railing at it. Your success in life depends solely upon one quality.

"What is that?" demanded Walter, with flashing eyes.

"Perseverance."

Walter's lip curled bitterly as he said, "Will perseverance compensate me for the loss of a musical education? Will it earn the bread I eat, unless I employ my time at a business I hate, and am not fitted for?" Here Mr. Rodman turned his head and looked at Walter, as a monarch

might glance at a slave who expressed an opinion. Walter, however, went on. "If my father had not died a bankrupt three years ago, my whole future life would have run in a different channel."

"True!" returned Mr. Cardover, "but in that exigency it relieved your father's heart to find the hand of his old friend stretched out to you."

"Yes," said the young man, in a gentler voice; "I do not forget that Mr. Rodman was my father's faithful friend in his last sorrowful days. Still nature has intimated what my vocation should be, and I cannot be satisfied as I am."

"If you ever take an honorable place among men, it will be owing in a great measure to your father's dying at the exact period he did!"

"How so?"

"Had he lived, and continued prosperous, you would not have settled upon any one pursuit. You would have had means of gratifying every wandering inspiration, and would consequently have been an idler in the busy world, finding none of the gems which hard experience turns over to the seeker. More than many others, you need the balance-wheel of labor. We are indebted to toiling spirits for all that is great and glorious in the world."

"I would toil in my art," answered Walter, sadly. "I am not a willing laborer now. My lot and I are at discord."

"And must remain so until you acquire faith to believe the eternal God also has a plan of your life more great and harmonious than your own. You have power to thwart it or to coincide with it. Instead of repining, why not alter your situation, or seek means to do so? Why blame your lot, instead of recognizing it as a foundation for something brighter and higher?"

"How can I be a musician?" asked Walter, with a slight impatience in his tone.

"You can begin by doing little at first. What time do you go to the store in the morning?"

"About eight o'clock."

"Then if you rise at half-past four, you will have three hours to devote to music every morning, besides many evenings. I think I can get permission for you to play on that fine old organ in the church; you can obtain the organist as teacher."

A smile flashed over Walter's face. "I never thought of that," he said, grasping Mr. Cardover's hand. "Thanks!"

"I suppose it will belong to me to convey him from the organ to the store at the proper hour," said Mr. Bedell.

Walter laughed, and obeying the impulse that seized him, took his flute, and went out on the rear piazza, in the summer moonshine. In a moment a sweet, triumphant strain floated in.

"You are satisfied with destiny, James?" inquired Mr. Cardover.

"No, sir," answered Mr. Bedell, with a smile, and quiet decision of manner. "I am tolerably content at present, for I expect to go over low steps before I reach my object. I must labor slowly, and contend against the world in a different manner from Walter. There is a charm in every thing he says and does, which makes him friends instantly. It is a pleasure to forward one like him; it is natural that men should wish him success. I think I have learned exactly where I stand, and I think I shall conquer notwithstanding."

Miss Cardover looked at James with shining eyes, in which there beamed almost maternal pride. Mr. Cardover said, "Walter's personal advantages will be of no real benefit to him; he will rely too much upon them; they will

make him more self-indulgent than he would otherwise be."

"Are we not staying late, Pliny?" asked Miss Cardover.

Her brother rose. "Are they all well at home, aunt?" asked Mr. Bedell with familiar interest.

"Quite well!" returned Miss Cardover. "Never neglect your regular visits, James, for father and mother expect you always. I think old people ought never to be disappointed," she added, smiling, as she turned to bid Mrs. Rodman "good evening." After they had gone, Cousin John's soul transmigrated into its former shell.

"A light?" he said, looking on the mantel-piece, although they were all burning on his wife's work-stand.

"Here, John!" she answered cheerfully, handing him one. He left us without a "good night." It struck a pang into my heart; it assured me that Mr. Rodman did not think me worthy the courtesy due a guest; I was simply a burden thrown upon him for support. He had joined his wife in inviting me to live with them, because he could not very well avoid it, rather than from liberal motives. A sickening despair was settling around my heart, through which surged the angry tide of resentment and bitter pride. "What to do?" I was asking mentally, as I took a lamp to retire. I believe Cousin Mary half divined my thoughts, for when I looked at her, her dark eyes were bent upon me very sorrowfully. She put her arm around my waist, and kissing my cheek said,—

"You will look upon me as your sincere friend, will you not? Look upon me as a mother, or elder sister."

I thanked her, and returned her kiss, hastily leaving the room lest a tear should betray the feelings contending within me. "What to do?" was the aching thought with which I fell asleep at last.

CHAPTER II.

When Sunday came, we went to church, and sat in a great pew, which we nearly filled. It was an old-fashioned church, not destitute of a solemn grandeur and quiet that charmed the soul. As Cousin Mary bowed her head in worship, it seemed akin to the solemn verities of her life. Cousin John also bowed his head on first taking his seat, but he did it hurriedly, and looked around at every new-comer with a careless interest immediately on raising it. A little party came in that absorbed my attention from devotional thoughts also. It was an aged pair, followed by a younger lady and gentleman. The latter seated the three, and then stood a moment speaking with the lady who walked up the aisle with him. He had a thoughtful face, beaming with a kind of heavenly light; his mouth was very beautiful, and his brow and head had a shapely beauty that denoted a superior intellect. Many eyes turned to him with interest. He ascended the pulpit steps, and with joy I recognized him as the preacher. When the sermon began, the eyes of the multitude did not remove from his face, and thirsty ears drank in his thoughts, filled with life and strength, and clothed with chaste elegance.

"What do you think of our minister, Mr. Waldron, Kate?" asked Cousin Mary, as we emerged from the church.

"I was delighted with him." The Cardovers here approached us, and cordial greetings passed. My eyes fell upon an enchanting child who clung to Miss Cardover's hand. Her eyes, full of luminous softness, turned to Walter, who walked beside me; he motioned to her, and she skipped to his side with a joyous laugh.

"Lily, what have you been doing lately?" he asked, taking her little hand in his.

"O, every thing but what I ought to do, Mr. Walter. But I'm going to be real good when I begin school again. Do you believe some of the girls say Aunt Cardover isn't my real aunt, and she only took me to live with her because I was so forlorn nobody would have any thing to do with me. I don't care! I'm as good as they are. Would you care, Mr. Walter?"

"O, no! Study your lessons and cultivate your mind, Lily! That is all you must think about."

"I must cultivate my heart," said the child naively. "It's very hard work." She heaved a little sigh, probably in remembrance of some misdemeanor; then, with a joyous light in her large eyes, she tripped away with Miss Cardover, saying, "Good-bye! good-bye!"

"You think Grace and the two children will certainly come to-morrow?" I said to Cousin Mary, as the lovely Lily disappeared.

"Yes, certainly. You will like Grace, Kate," she answered.

"I think I shall, from the letter you read me from her."

"She is such a darling in my eyes," pursued Cousin Mary, "I cannot understand how others can see her in a different light from what I do. You must remember that my representation of her is dictated by partial affection. Don't expect too much."

"Very well put in," remarked Mr. Rodman, who walked a little ahead. We had not supposed he had heard us. "Grace is well enough."

It was an exceedingly warm day; after dinner I took a book and sought the back piazza, which was in shade, and partially embowered by heavy vines. Walter came out, and began to play very softly on his flute. Mr. Bedell followed with a book.

"Lily is your aunt's adopted child?" I said, still thinking of her beauteous looks.

"She bears the same relation to Miss Cardover that I do," answered Mr. Bedell. "I was without parents or home when Miss Cardover adopted me. One day, ten years ago, I had an immense basket of chips on my head. I earned a little money by selling them; a German boy knocked over my burden, and ran on laughing. I stooped to pick up my load as Miss Cardover came along.

"'Who is that cruel boy, my poor child?' asked the strange lady coming to my side.

"'Don't know!' said I, without looking up, for there was a hardened pride in me that rebelled at pity.

"'I'll help you!' she said, as she assisted me. 'Where do you live?'

"'In the next street!'

"'And I live in that house yonder, at the very end of the street. Do you see it? It is light yellow. I should like to have you come to-morrow and see me. Will you come?'

"'What time shall I come?'

"'Early in the morning.'

"I went, and Miss Cardover learned all my story. She adopted me that very day;—she gave me a sound English education and honest principles. She taught me that all men were equal in the sight of God, and that I demeaned

myself when I was ashamed of my beggary—it was an accident, as well as the possession of riches. I think I am not very ambitious;—I know I am not a brilliant fellow, but if working and plodding will send me up on the ladder among men who are honored, I shall go up, and show Miss Cardover what she has made of me. I never expect to repay her for what she has done for me. I *couldn't* do it! But it will please her to see me do well in the world. Whenever I am tempted to fall into the vices common among young men, I think of her, and say to myself, 'Ingratitude! No, James Bedell, you shall never be guilty of that!' "

"Did Mr. Cardover live in the family with you?" I asked.

"He did after the first three years. He ran away, and went to sea—he used to be a wild fellow; not bad, but so fond of adventure: he went to Egypt with a gentleman, and raked among the ruins there; he went to Rome, to Greece, to Turkey, even to Norway. He used to write such interesting letters home. Miss Cardover used to fear he never would come back, and settle down like other people. But the very day he was twenty-one he came back, and has been steady ever since. He is what I call one of nature's noblemen. He isn't very handsome, but he never speaks without being listened to."

Walter suddenly stopped in the midst of an air he was playing! We both looked at him; he colored slightly, and went on.

"Who is that beautiful girl?" I asked, looking into the next yard, where a white-robed maiden was walking among the flower-beds.

"That is Judith Morton. Grace is acquainted with her."

"How superbly beautiful she is! How graceful and stately! What sort of a young lady is she?"

"I don't know I am sure," said James. "Walter, you

went in there one evening with Grace, not long ago. Tell us if she is equal to Grace. She isn't half as handsome."

"Not half as handsome!" repeated Walter. "Why, Bedell, you are no judge of beauty at all. Grace has a frank, interesting face,—she pleases irresistibly. But there is no comparison between her and Miss Morton for beauty." Here the object of our remarks looked up, and bowed to Walter with a most hesitatingly coquettish air.

"You look very cosy there," she said. "I hope you are only talking of psalms and hymns, as it is Sunday."

"If it were not Sunday, we should hope to spirit you into our midst," answered Walter.

"I do penance for my sins on Sunday!" she laughed. "I have the blues regularly. There!" and she flung a bouquet into our midst. "Fancy my unhappy spirit is exhaling those odors!" She tripped lightly up the steps, and went into the house. Walter looked as if he had seen a vision; but he did not say any thing. Cousin John came to the back door; his great dark shadow fell on us.

"I think," said he, "you would be much better employed in reading your Bibles. Walter, I must request you not to play on that instrument on the Sabbath."

"I do not wish to desecrate the Sabbath," returned Walter, "but I think there is less harm in enjoying music than yielding to idle thoughts."

"You need not yield to idle thoughts, while there are edifying books in the house."

"I have been reading in the Bible," said Mr. Gray.

Cousin John went in the house. "Old hypocrite!" said Walter, "it is his very affectation of a religion he does not possess, that makes us hate it."

"Stop, there!" said James, "we do not hate true religion. We do not value a sound bill less because counterfeits are issued."

CHAPTER III.

Grace and the children had arrived. They came in the afternoon while we were at tea. Josephine bounded into the room first, her curls flying, her arms outspread. She sprang into her mother's lap, and devoured her with kisses, saying every other instant, "We're got here; ain't you glad!" Then she embraced her father, Mr. Bedell and Walter, in the same fashion. She kissed me bashfully. Grace and Gertrude came in together: the former was about twenty; her countenance was brilliant with the warmest affection. When she clasped Cousin Mary to her heart and kissed her, I felt how thoroughly they loved each other; and my own heart bounded towards that happy creature with instant love and hope. After the greetings were over, and the bustle of preparing a fresh tea-table, to which we sat down, past, I looked long at Grace while she talked and laughed; and every moment I looked, I loved her better. She was not beautiful strictly, but there was heart in every thing she said and did,—every movement was so natural, every word and look so spontaneous, so cordial. Her large eyes were of a dark gray; they looked black sometimes when they flashed with laughter, and again they had a dreamy, dovelike look, which does not often belong to a black eye. Her rich brown hair was worn in the madonna style; an empress might have envied those beautiful, abundant braids: her complexion was neither light nor dark, and her nose was

moderately well shaped; her full lips would almost have had a voluptuous expression, if a proud dignity that rested upon them had not repelled the thought. Her form was completely perfect; even Judith Morton had not so beautiful a carriage, so queenly a head. There was a sense of abounding life about Grace, a something in her very presence that created cheerfulness. Gertrude looked like her mother; she was a methodical child, the reverse of Josephine. Cousin Grace went up stairs after tea, to unpack her trunk: her sister followed to help her. Josephine slipped out of the front door, and went into Mr. Morton's, to see Frank Morton,—Gertrude settled herself for a nap on the settee. She had not been there many moments, when her mother called to her to bring her the dust-brush. The young lady was evidently in the arms of Morpheus.

"Why don't that child go?" said Walter. I rose to get the required article, but he touched my arm and went to Gertrude; he looked down in her face until her eyelids winked,—still she did not move: he laid the point of his finger on her forehead in different places, and counted "one, two, three, four."

"Stop!" cried Gertrude, covering her face with her hands. "What are you doing?"

"I am counting the freckles!" responded Walter, mildly.

"I wish you would let me alone!" and she fled to the kitchen, looking very angry,—in a moment she was flying up stairs with the dust-brush, and was not seen below stairs all the evening.

"There is a rap at the front-door," said Walter, looking up from his book; "what a fine thing it must be, to be in love!"

"What has love to do with that knock at the door? any thing?"

"Yes; a good deal. That sounds like Mr. Benzoni's knock. He is Grace's lover!"

"Grace's lover! Is she engaged to be married?" I asked in dismay.

"Certainly. Didn't you know it?"

"No, indeed! I supposed she and I could sympathize in that respect. She has come like a sunbeam into the house; and now, that Mr. Benzoni must come and carry her off, just as I shall find her necessary to my happiness! Well, are they tender and true, and all that sort of thing? Is he handsome, and fully worthy of Grace?"

"He is very handsome! I know nothing of his disposition; he is an Italian, and these foreigners manifest their feelings so differently from what we do. He seems to make a perfect goddess of his lady-love; and Grace's countenance shines, as Moses' did when he came down from the Mount, every time he comes. There! she is tripping down stairs. Do you see her smiling to herself?" She looked, as she ran down, into the dining-room where we sat; her large eyes seemed of a brilliant black; the fever flush of joy was upon her cheeks. How gloriously beautiful she was! how mere physical beauty paled before the splendor of soul that lighted up her face! Mr. Benzoni rushed out into the hall to meet her; Walter and I very unwillingly looked the other way when they met. After they had gone into the parlor Walter said,—

"Wouldn't you like to call on Miss Morton? You have exchanged flowers over the fence! Why not form a more intimate acquaintance? Josephine is in there; we can go after her."

"I would a little rather not," I replied.

"Why not?" he asked quickly.

"I would rather Miss Morton should make the first advances to me."

"She *has* done so! you told me yesterday that she threw you a very beautiful dahlia over the fence, and said, "Isn't that pretty, ma belle?"

"Yes! but still I do not know that she would desire to number me among her visiting acquaintances! You know her father is wealthy." I blushed as I said this, for it was hard for me to speak of my dependent situation; I had heard Cousin Mary say that Mr. Morton valued friends mostly for the dollars and cents they owned. I felt sure he would not care about my being intimate with his daughter; and I knew that my antiquated dresses would seem out of place beside her graceful garments.

"Won't you go?" asked Walter, looking at me very earnestly.

"Oh! I can't go!"

"Very well!" He took up his hat and went into the hall; at this moment the front door opened, and I heard Miss Morton's voice, saying,—

"I have brought this child back, Mr. Gray; I don't approve of her fascinating my brother! I won't have him coquetted with. Where is Miss Percival? I must congratulate her on her return?"

Josephine had pushed open the parlor door,—she was timidly shaking hands with Mr. Benzoni. Grace came forward, and greeting Miss Morton cordially, urged us all to come in the parlor. We went in. Mr. Benzoni riveted my attention, he was so brilliantly handsome; he had wild, splendid eyes; they betrayed a reckless, passionate heart,—his dark complexion set off his white teeth well: when he smiled, he made me think of a powerful bandit who never smiled except in triumph; as he passed his hand through the rich, clustering masses of his hair, and looked at me first, carelessly; then at Judith, with a long, observing gaze, there was something in his whole demeanor that indicated a will,

reckless enough to override all obstacles, to reach a purpose he might have at heart. I looked at Judith! There was a strange interest in her awakened eyes,—she glanced away, then looked at him again, as though some fascination led her to study him. Their beauty was not unlike; they had the same southern eyes, and dark, waving, curling hair. I could not but acknowledge that Judith was more superbly beautiful than Grace; every feature was so exquisitely perfect: her sudden smiles, the uplifting of her liquid eyes, every play of expression seemed to captivate. She did not say a great deal, and what she did say was not remarkable in itself, yet there was a nameless fascination that kept one watching her,—there was a spell about her, an untold grace that invested her like an atmosphere; she seemed perfectly natural in her conversation and movements; she had been so accustomed to please, that she had not learned the constraint that often springs from the chill, which indifferent glances give. Grace looked at her with heartfelt pleasure; she was glad to see her happy, when she felt that she had so much less to make her so, than herself. And yet, although I loved to watch Judith, and enjoyed her company heartily, I felt that I should choose Grace for a friend, and lean upon her heart with far more confidence. Walter and Judith talked together, and their gay repartees drew forth sudden bursts of laughter from all of us. Josephine stood at the side of Grace, with her elbow leaning on her lap; she would clap her hands at any thing funny, and bend down her curly head over them, laughing so heartily, Walter declared she never could be straightened up again, unless they restrained their wit.

"The child's life must be saved, at any risk," said Judith, "so I will go this instant!"

Mrs. Rodman came to the parlor door and called Josephine, to put her to bed. Walter went to Mr. Morton's

porch with Judith, saying, it was particularly dangerous for young ladies to walk such a distance alone in the evening. I went to my chamber, now to be shared by Grace: I was grateful that the house was to become cheerful with her presence, and that darling little Josephine's: Gertrude I did not think so much of. Hour after hour I lay awake, and pondered my prospects: every day, it seemed more intolerable that I should live on Cousin John's bounty. Grace was governess to the children; if she were not, I was not fitted to instruct them, for I only understood the English branches. True, I had sewed a good deal for Cousin Mary: she had taught me how to make Cousin John's shirts very neatly. I had more than earned my board, but it was evident Mr. Rodman thought the benefit conferred was all on his side. The bitterness of dependence was ground into my very soul. I had thought of trying to earn my living in some way, and boarding among strangers, that I might be independent; but now the house seemed so homelike; I was so irresistibly attracted to Grace, and felt such a yearning love springing up in my heart for little Josephine. Cousin Mary was exceedingly kind, and James and Walter seemed like brothers. I cried myself to sleep as I had done many nights before, without being able to decide what I had best do. When I awoke in the morning, Grace was dressed, and was reading some letters by the window.

"Good morning!" said I.

"Oh! good morning!" she answered, coloring even to her fair neck; she thrust the letters in that same box I had seen on the dressing-table.

"Are you afraid of me, Cousin Grace?" I asked. "I can guess whom those letters are from; I won't betray you, or ask to hear any secrets you are not disposed to tell!"

She smiled, and came to me, saying, "Don't you think we shall like each other, Cousin Kate? I always form

friendships hastily,—but now I am prudent enough, for Mary said herself she thought you were a good girl."

"And will you be my friend, Grace?"

"Yes! indeed I will!"

After breakfast we returned to our room. I debated whether I should tell Grace I was bent upon going out some day to seek my fortune; I wanted to keep it a secret from Mr. and Mrs. Rodman; I could not endure the idea of taking Cousin John's advice in the matter, of being under his control in the least. I would rather do worse, and be my own mistress.

"Don't my clothes look dreadfully old-fashioned beside yours, Grace?" I asked.

"They do!" she laughed. "I wonder if I can't help you to alter them like mine. I will sew for you, but I have no dress-making skill. Can you lead off?"

"I can try. I regret so much that grandmother made such a child of me. I have learned more about sewing since I have been here than I ever knew before. In our circumstances, I ought to have learnt a trade, or have been educated for a teacher."

"Don't you feel at home here?"

"I begin to feel a good deal at home,—it would be very hard for me to leave here now. But it would be better for me, as an orphan, to seek some means whereby I might be independent of present circumstances. I do not know what lies before me in the future. It is not pleasant to me to be a burden on Cousin John's bounty."

"Kate, how can you say so, when you are so useful in the family? Sister Mary has a seamstress a great part of the time. You save her that expense. I heard her this morning saying a few words to brother John about paying you a salary for your aid."

"Did you hear his reply?" I asked, not wholly able to repress a bitter accent.

"No!" she answered, coloring, "I left the room." In a few moments she added: "I think, Kate, you mind Mr. Rodman's manner too much: I have known of a great many noble acts of his. He has redeeming qualities."

"I never saw them!" burst from my lips with a sudden energy that startled me. I repented the words the moment they were uttered.

Grace said, "We are used to him: he is more morose of late than he used to be. He treats us all alike: if any thing he is more complaisant to you, as a late member of the family, than the rest of us."

"I have observed it. I thought at first his moroseness was occasioned by my entrance into the family. If I had had one friend in Boston beside Cousin Mary, I should not have spent my second night under this roof. But as you say, I see that his coldness of manner extends to all. I wonder what makes him seem so gloomy and dissatisfied!"

"I wish I knew!" returned Grace, with a sigh. "Mary spends her life in trying to remove annoyances from his path. I cannot but pray God that her sacrificing efforts may not all be in vain. Once in a while I see an expression of dreary hopelessness come over her face; it goes to my heart so! She never confides to me her feelings, but I should be blind indeed if I did not read them."

"He is a professing Christian?" I said, half questioningly.

"Certainly! He is not the only one whose heavenly zeal has died out. But, Kate, he is not aware that he has so far forgotten the Saviour's life and example on earth. I think those who wander far from love and God should be cared for with tenfold more devotion than those who readily keep the narrow way. It seems right that each of us should bend our

silent efforts towards him, because he needs forbearance, indulgence and good feeling."

"I can feel so for a moment, but my Christian forbearance is constantly upset. However, I am going to try to indulge a better spirit. Still, Grace, I am human enough to desire to show him that he does not contribute in the least towards my support. I am going out this afternoon, to see if I cannot obtain some kind of plain sewing at the stores: then I shall pay my board regularly into the family. I wish I could teach."

"Are you not competent?"

"No!"

"I'll give you lessons, Kate, with pleasure. It would be a miserable thing for you to sew all your life."

"I know it. There is a restlessness in my nature that would prevent me from doing it contentedly. I thank you with all my heart for your offer. When shall we begin?"

"This evening, if you choose. Oh, no! to-morrow," she added, laughing and blushing. "Mr. Benzoni is coming to tea to-night, and he will spend the evening."

The children came running into the room. "Come, Aunt Grace," cried Josephine, "it is school-time."

How lovely the child looked, albeit not a regular beauty: her luxuriant wealth of ringlets are her crown of glory. Her eyes are blue, and not large, but when she raises her lashes, and looks up in one's face, there is a world of confiding innocence revealed, that makes one dream of heaven: and this innocence rests upon her lips, it speaks in her voice, and in her childish, graceful bearing. She has a lovely form, such an one as Grace must have had when a child. Grace went to her daily duties in the school-room with the children. She left me fashioning one of my dresses after the model of hers.

After dinner I arrayed myself in it, and was agreeably

surprised to find what a difference a modern dress made in my appearance, not that it transformed me into an elegant-looking young lady, but it rescued me from looking unusually awkward. Grace came into our chamber while I was turning around before the glass with great complacency.

"Haven't I rather *l'air distingué*, Miss Percival?" I exclaimed, laughing, as I saw a smile on her lip. "Do I pronounce that French sentence properly?"

"Yes. But, Kitty, how much better you look? And how nicely it fits!" turning me around, that she might examine the dress. I took up my bonnet to put it on, after she had satisfied herself with praising my made-over black silk. She took my bonnet from my hand.

"Trim it over, Kate. It looks so stiff and forlorn!" In a few moments she had ripped all the ribbon off my straw bonnet, and was running down stairs to iron it smoothly, bidding me take out the inside trimming while she was gone. In half an hour, by dint of our united suggestions and labors, my bonnet wore an improved appearance.

I sallied forth into the street with tremulous but determined courage. A sky of tender, azure clearness bent above me: a light wind sprang up as I sauntered on, looking now at the store windows, now at the passers-by, and then up into the pure depths above. For ever they bend down the same, albeit the fluctuating clouds, like human fortunes, may conceal the tranquillity beyond. I scarcely knew where to go, and yet I paced on with assurance and hope. Humble as my errand was, it was to me as important as a far more ambitious scheme might have been to a wealthy merchant or millionnaire. My heart beat hastily as I came to a large clothing store: I saw several shirts in the window for exhibition, and looked at them eagerly, wondering if I could make them look as smooth. Within I saw a fashionably dressed lady, buying a suit of clothes for a little boy: the

shopkeeper looked so smiling and pleasant, I gathered up my courage, and went in. While the lady was engaged with her little boy, the clerk turned to me with the same agreeable smile, and asked what I would have.

"Have you shirts to give out?" I asked, with less of trepidation than I had supposed I could get along with.

"Ah!" said the young man, as a somewhat different expression came over his countenance. The lady turned to him, and with his courteous manner he exclaimed, "Those fit admirably, madam! Shall we send them home?"

"You may;" returned the lady, with something of the haughty air the clerk had used towards me. She scanned me coldly, even disdainfully, although I could not see why she should do so: on her superficial face might be read idolatry for the outward trappings of life, rather than an appreciation for wealth that may light up the inward world. It was my first lesson in regard to one of the effects of poverty. However, it did not lessen me in my own esteem, it merely made me indulge in some very indignant and uncharitable feelings, and led me to ask how far others can injure our souls without a spoken word: perhaps it did me good, for there sprang up in my heart a fervent prayer that I might ever look upon those poorer than myself as God's own children. The lady disappeared, and then the clerk said,

"You want work, do you?"

I bowed, and said "Yes."

"Are you a good sewer?"

I looked at a pile of shirts lying on the counter, and said, "I can sew as well as this!" I began to feel all my courage ebb away: it was not restored by the young man's saying,

"That is *your* say so! How am I to know whether you can sew as well?"

The color rushed into my face at his tone: a choking in

my throat prevented me from speaking for a moment. I hesitated between pride and necessity. How could I go home unsuccessful? How could I subject myself to meeting this supercilious clerk often? The remembrance of my needs, the heavy chain of dependence on Cousin John, conquered. I said, "I think I can bring a sample of my work to show you."

An older man came forward to get a pile of cloth from the shelf: he caught sight of my flushed face and half quivering lips.

"Take this cloth to that gentleman, and wait on him, will you?" he said severely to the clerk, who obeyed. How grateful I was for the kind voice that said,

"Do you want work, my dear?"

I bowed silently: the hardly restrained tears dropped at his paternal accent.

"What is your name?" he asked. I gave it to him. He kept his eyes upon the bundle he handed me, that he might not seem to see my agitation. "Can you bring them back next week?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir. I thank you very much!" I looked at him as I spoke, and saw that he understood why I thanked him.

"Not at all, my dear!" he answered. "There is no more obligation on your side than on mine. We must have them made."

I went away, blessing him from the warmest depths of my heart. I hastened home, not as exultant as I expected I should be, with the means of independence in my hands, yet very much relieved and sobered after the last hour's experience. Grace was sewing in our chamber when I entered. "There is my fortune!" I exclaimed, tossing my bundle on the bed.

CHAPTER IV.

The next morning I settled myself down to my new business with cheerful, invigorated hopes. I began to feel as if I had a right to live, now that I could take care of myself. The house seemed more really like a home to me; even our chamber seemed brightened with an air of welcome and independence. While I was thus pleasantly musing, Grace came in, exclaiming, "Throw down your work for to-day, Kate. Mr. Benzoni is going to take us all to Mount Auburn! Won't it be delightful? He has just gone, and will return for us at ten o'clock."

Thus she spoke, with a radiant countenance; she looked so very happy, so much more happy than the mere fact of going to Mount Auburn warranted, when she had been there a few days before, that I was wondering how her thoughts ran. "How you will enjoy it, Kate; you have never been there: and sister Mary so seldom goes out; it will refresh her so much! Mr. Benzoni said the boys must go too; the carriage will hold nine with the driver."

"What shall I wear? What shall I wear?" exclaimed Gertrude and Josephine in a breath, as they rushed into the room.

"Come down stairs, pets," answered Grace; "you shall wear your clean pink calicoes. We will ride beyond Mount Auburn, and take our dinner in an apple orchard. "Oh! I

must pack some provisions for us. Why, Kate!" and Grace started back from the head of the stairs, "wouldn't it be pleasant to have Mr. and Miss Cardover go with us, or meet us if they cannot start when we do?"

"Yes, that would be charming! they are people after my own heart!"

"I'll send them word. Wear your hair in ringlets, Kittie."

"Will *you?*"

"Mr. Benzoni likes it better this way. Wasn't it thoughtful in him to take us all out this fine day?"

"It was very kind." Grace went down stairs, and now I had the key to her thoughts. It was a kind and thoughtful act on her lover's part, that illuminated her whole being; it delighted her that we were all to have a festival. I have noticed in Mr. Benzoni a disposition quite different from that of his betrothed; he seems to think and care little for the happiness of others. Perhaps Grace divines this, but I know she does not acknowledge it to herself—her love gives a pure coloring to all his words and acts. Mr. Benzoni is all devotion, and yet when I see Grace's eye beam with a generous sentiment, and hear her pour out her frank enthusiasm for a noble deed, I look to see if the same heart beats in her lover's breast. He usually smiles and looks admiringly upon the animated face that turns to him for sympathy—Grace reads it in his smile. He admires her beautiful emotion as he would a fine picture; he does not feel it with her. And yet she may be the appointed one to kindle within his soul purer fires of humanity. I have even thought sometimes that she would charm him more if she were not so heavenly pure, so thoroughly unsuspecting. When her inner nature unfolds itself like a fragrant flower, I almost fancy Mr. Benzoni's spirit removes to a distance, and does not return to her with delight until she enters the outer court of her being.

"Cousin Kate, Grace says, will you run down, and see whether Mr. Bedell or Mr. Gray will go with us to-day, because father will want one of them at the store." Josephine put her head in the door with this message, and ran away again. I proceeded to the dining-room where the young men were sitting, and asked which of them could go to our picnic.

"Picnic!" echoed Walter, "who are going?"

"The family and Mr. Benzoni."

"No one else?"

"Perhaps Mr. Cardover and his sister."

"Why not have one or two more?"

"Perhaps we may. But which of you will go?"

"Take your choice, James," said Walter.

"I cannot possibly go to-day. I have an engagement this afternoon," said Mr. Bedell.

"O, true! The young idea, &c.," laughed Walter gayly. "Here am I, Miss Hamilton. Three cheers for the picnic." Walter's cap whizzed in the air, and his three cheers made the windows rattle. "Wouldn't you like to have Miss Morton go, and Frank? He would be company for the children."

"Shall I ask Grace? Mr. Benzoni is to take us all."

"I'll get a carriage for Miss Morton and the children."

"Don't make such rapid advances to Miss Morton. I think there is a spice of coquetry in her nature. She will think twice as much of you if it takes a great while to bring you to her feet."

"Will she?"

"Certainly."

At ten o'clock we were all seated in the carriage; Miss Morton and Walter occupied the back seat. Mr. and Miss Cardover were to meet us at the Cemetery in the afternoon. "Crack went the whip, round went the wheels," and we

dashed away in a delightful exhilaration of spirits. How delicious seemed the country air, after having been shut up in the city nearly two months. It was a day for fancy to ride free; to cleave with her shining wings the joyous air, and mount up to the heaven of her hopes. It was a day to dream of love, love only, pure and undefiled—a day in which it is natural for the young heart to inquire whether in all the beautiful universe there beats another heart capable of responding to all that is best, and highest, and holiest within—a day in which the well-spring of gratitude overflows to God for the gift of being; yet, with this gratitude, there mingles an aching sense of something distant and divine which we cannot reach. The soul of the universe murmurs a melody to the inward spirit, which awakens all its deep unsatisfied yearnings. Oh, to understand that the hour to read the mystery were now!

I could not but catch the conversation between Walter and Judith; indeed they were not conversing *tête-à-têts*. Walter would have had it so, but Miss Morton lightly threw off every approach to tenderness; she was too coquettish to seem to understand his ardent admiration; she gave a merry turn to words that almost trembled from his lips. She drew me into the conversation, and at last we were all looking around, and laughing and jesting with her—Mr. Benzoni more heartily than any of us. She did not often look at him, but she listened to hear his rich laughter, and then a fresh mantle of fascination fell over her; she was so gay, so bewitching, who could forbear loving her? Our dear Grace was not so enchanting, and Mr. Benzoni thought so. Oh, darling Grace, do you not see the thunderbolt overhead? Does not the air grow black, the green leaves folded over your heart wither? No! oh, no! Faith sits at her heart, and she looks at Judith with her sweet, kind eyes, and laughs joyously. But we grow more silent as we enter amid the silent graves of

Mount Auburn. We had not wandered long, when Miss Cardover and her brother joined us; the former sought Cousin Mary, and the latter, with a quick glance, scanned the party, until his eye rested upon Miss Morton. After a few kind words to Josephine and myself, he left us and joined the group near Judith. All were absorbed in some eager interest but myself, and a homeless pang struck my heart. I seemed so unnecessary to the happiness of the party; no one wilfully neglected me, and it was the merest accident or my own reserve that prevented me from joining the others. Josephine drew me to a conspicuous monument; I sat down upon a grave, and thought of the last time I had been in a churchyard, and of the friend who had lately been laid under the sod. I could have bowed my face down upon the green earth, and have wept with all my soul, but it would not do. A few tears fell, and Josephine observed it.

"What is it, Cousin Kate?" she asked very softly.

"I was thinking of my grandmother, darling; you know it is not long since I saw her buried."

The child looked down thoughtfully, and then, with an artless attempt at consolation, said, "But she isn't in the ground, she is living in Heaven."

Her words struck the right vein. Why should I weep over earthly loneliness, instead of lifting my eyes to the life hereafter? Why wish that another's heavenly joy should be bartered for earth again, in order that I might be a little more at home?

"All these people are in the spiritual world, Cousin Kate, are they?" and Josephine pointed to the many graves. "Mother says so."

I assented. Glorious revealings of a better world were filling my spirit with an unwonted light. Bands of shining angels seemed lifting up my thoughts from earth, opening to me a career broad and bright as eternity. What if I seemed

of little value in the lowly path where I was, it could still lead upward. Many millions of earth's children had passed through their discipline, and the faithful and heaven-hearted were filling out their destiny in a happier sphere. Life, sweet life, should never be torn from me. The blessed child at my side should never perish; she should bloom in heaven, where her opening graces should refresh others as they refreshed me. There descended into my soul a quiet conviction that my present circumstances were fitted with a divine nicety to my real needs, provided I sought out a health-giving element in them. I lifted Josephine on my knee, and talked with her a long time, sometimes telling her a story, and sometimes answering the questions she asked. It is always a cordial and solace to turn from selfish repining to impart instruction to a child. Every unquiet feeling had vanished, when at last her blue eyes were raised earnestly to mine, for I saw far back in their depths a prayer of inquiry for the holy way. She said nothing as this look came into her face, but she clasped her lovely arms around my neck, and pressed her soft kisses on my cheek.

"Let us go find the others, dear," I said, rising. At the same moment I heard them calling us. Grace came in sight, exclaiming,

"Oh, here you are!" She was followed by Mr. Benzoni, Walter and Judith. The quick eyes of Grace scanned my face, as if to learn why I had not been with the others. She seemed satisfied with the cheerful expression she met, both on my own countenance and that of Josephine. We rambled away to the carriage, which was to convey us to a neighboring orchard for dinner. Only bright smiling eyes met me, and cordial words. Thus I learned that when we feel neglected, it is often because we desire to draw more from others than they can very well spare. When we meet them in a generous spirit, and are willing that they should act out the

frankness of their hearts, we are met ourselves with a like candor and warmth. It was not long before we had assembled under a spreading apple tree in the orchard, merrily engaged in laying our table-cloth on the grass, and spreading out the noontide meal. The gentlemen were dispatched for water, stones for seats, and on various other commissions to beguile their impatience, real or pretended, for dinner. Judith was all animation, jesting now with one, now with another; ever and anon chatting with Grace in gentle tones, then turning to answer some gay sally from Walter or Mr. Cardover. But there was one dark eye that she met sometimes and blushed; then it seemed treason when she talked gently with Grace. I watched her countenance and gestures with great curiosity, for she was a problem to me. I could not decide whether some heart and generosity might lurk beneath all her lightness, or whether she was artful in the extreme.

Dinner over, we went back to the cemetery. Miss Cardover sat down and motioned Grace and me to sit beside her. The others were slowly walking about in a quiet mood. Mr. Benzoni walked beside Cousin Mary and the children, but his glances sought Judith. She wandered hither and thither to look at various inscriptions; all her levity was gone. Mr. Cardover joined her; I heard him say, in a low tone,

"Does it sadden you to come to a place like this?" and he looked down in her beautiful face, with the approving gaze she so often won.

"It does now!" she softly answered, and her large liquid eyes dwelt on the scene; then she laid her rose-tinted cheek against a marble stone, and the eyes of her companion rested on her, as if she had been a heavenly madonna. With the outward adorning of an angel what a glorifier of life might she be. I could not but hope her young feet would tread lightly over the roses of adulation, and that on a quiet re-

trospect, the subtle shapes of temptation would appear to her in their true character. She left Mr. Cardover to sit beside Josephine, who was in vain trying to make a wreath of green leaves and wild flowers. Judith's little jewelled fingers gleamed brightly amid the dark green leaves of the wreath. Gertrude had just completed one which she laid upon the graceful head of the young girl; smiles broke from every lip; the crown of flowers made her resplendent. Her surpassing beauty awoke bewildering visions of the angels, who live and love in the "silent land." How entrancingly beautiful must *they* be, the pure in heart, whose sweetness shines from within; whose loveliness grows more dazzling amid the "diamond life" of heaven! Such a celestial one would Grace become!—such a noontide splendor of beauty awaited her. I turned to look at her; all color had retreated from her face, and her lips were white; her eyes were fixed upon Mr. Benzoni with an indescribable expression of suffering and entreaty; a dreadful surprise was in her look; she saw the thunderbolt. He was gazing upon Judith with a strange passionate ardor. "Come and see this design!" I said, taking her hand. She gasped for breath, and followed me. She looked at the figure I pointed out and murmured "Yes!"—then she sat down, saying she was very tired. We sat there voiceless for a long time; it was a sheltered nook, a safe hiding-place. At last she breathed more freely; "Judith is very beautiful, is she not?" she asked.

"Very!" said I. "Every one looks on beauty with delight, but we often admire greatly where we could not love!"

"Yes!" and the light of hope came slowly over her face; her deadly paleness had gradually receded.

"I hear them inquiring for us," said I, after another long silence. At this moment Mr. Benzoni caught a glimpse of our dresses, and came to us. He took both of Grace's

hands in his, ere he drew her from her retreat. "Why have you hidden from me so long, dearest?" he asked, drawing her arm within his.

"Oh! *because;* a woman's reason!" and she looked up in his face with such joy, such a fulness of confiding love. She was upbraiding herself for her foolish suspicions. It was time to go home. The sunshine, all mellow and soft, gilded the tree tops; a dim, religious light was in the shaded dells, and a flood of amber streamed and lost itself in many an opening vista. Mr. Benzoni was very attentive to Grace during the drive home; he did not even glance at Judith; she amused herself with Walter, whose eyes shone as if he were in the seventh heaven of happiness. Frank Morton, Gertrude and Josephine, had managed to crowd down on the bottom of the carriage, and were pretending to sleep, but every moment or two there was an explosion of laughter from them that betrayed intense wakefulness. The prim red brick house seemed very much like home when we reached it.

CHAPTER V.

The moon came shining into the parlor in full effulgence, casting the foliage of the sycamore tree in front of the house, in shadow upon the carpet. The lightly waving shadows, the soft unrealness about the room, the pure serenity of the evening disposed Grace and myself into a confiding mood. The dining-room door stood ajar, and Mr. Rodman's petulant voice reached our ears; he was in conversation with his wife.

"Oh, John!" we heard her say, "how cheerfully I could bear any thing to lighten your burdens. Poverty seems to me an evil so much lighter than many others."

"You know nothing about it," he replied. "You women are so sentimental. You know nothing of the hard knocks men get in contact with the world. Your sympathy is all talk; it don't help the matter any."

Cousin Mary was silent. In a few moments Mr. Rodman rose, and as he left the room he said, "Good evening, Mary," in a softer voice.

"Good evening, John!" she returned, but there were tears in her voice. And then we heard a suppressed weeping after he had left her. She rose, and went to her chamber.

"What does it mean?" I asked, looking into the wistful countenance of Grace.

"I don't know, I am sure," she answered. "John must have business difficulties. Perhaps that accounts for his being less communicative lately than usual."

"Probably [redacted] and for his being more cross than"—I was going to say—"than ever," but finished the sentence with "he used to be."

"Suppose he should fail?" suggested Grace.

"What should we do?" I asked, then added, "I am so tired of sewing all the time, and I earn so little. I can never be contented to vegetate away my days in this way. I am going to see if I cannot do something that will enlist my interest. I believe I could teach drawing by this time in schools. I could sew, also, and then I should seem to be living to greater purpose."

"Kate!" said Grace, with energy, "I will make shirts, too. I feel convinced now from many little things that have dropped from Mary and John, that pecuniary trouble is at hand. I believe John is greatly in debt. It would harass Mary beyond expression if our family expenses should not be met. I will sew with you, and not let Mary know it; then, when an hour of great tribulation comes upon her, I shall have a little fund to offer her."

"That will be delightful!"

"Yes; then we shall have the interest of my thousand dollars to help us, too. Let us go to our room, and begin to sew this minute!"

We started up full of enthusiasm. A tall figure passed underneath the window; by the moonlight I saw a sudden smile flash over the lips of Grace; she hastened to the door, and admitted Mr. Benzoni. After a few moments I again started to leave the room.

"Don't go, Miss Kate," said Mr. Benzoni. "How would you like to go into the next house to spend the evening? What do you say, Grace?"

"Let us go," she answered, but I imagined a sudden pain struck her heart.

Mr. Benzoni arose, and Grace with him. She threw her kerchief over her head, saying, "Come, Kate."

"No!" I returned; "I shall be busy this evening."

"Oh, come!" she repeated, with a kind of imploring emphasis.

"No, not to-night. I feel like being very industrious."

They went, and my heart smote me for not going also. I caught a sigh from Grace as she passed through the door, and instantly comprehended that it would have been a relief to have me at her side, in order to give the conversation a more general turn, when Judith exercised her fascinations. It was becoming plain to me that Judith was greatly attracted to Mr. Benzoni; in the most artful ways she tried to captivate him; one thought of mercy for Grace never seemed to enter her mind. Occasionally she had dropped in to spend the evening when Mr. Benzoni was present, but never before had he proposed going in there. She was not satisfied with winning Grace's lover from her; she encouraged Walter, and kept him in a state between hope and fear all the time. Mr. Cardover had also been lured by her beauty and winning ways: with him she was gentle, pure and spiritual, as far as she could ape spirituality. I could not help looking at her in two ways: I saw and recognized the bewitching gracefulness of her looks and words; but often there seemed to gleam on me her cruel, naked soul, through her eyes. She grew intensely repugnant to me. I could not bear to see her enter the door, and I knew that Grace's feelings were similar, and more deeply painful, by the involuntary coldness that overspread her face the instant Judith appeared. But with heroic effort Grace strove to banish the coldness from her manner, and was always gentle and polite, never dropping a sarcastic word, as I sometimes did. Ju-

dith seemed determined to be intimate with both of us. I was with her most frequently, as Grace escaped whenever she could.

I went to my room, and thought over Grace's position with Mr. Benzoni. He came as frequently as ever, and kept up the same outward seeming. I could see that Grace did not give sufficient value to Judith's power of robbing her of her lover's affections; she still had confidence in him; often there seemed real tenderness in his manner, and this kept hope alive in her heart. I sewed and thought, and thought and sewed. "Why must our darling be slighted for that whited sepulchre?" and yet would it not be more pitiful still to see her Benzoni's wife? Should I entreat her to give him up at once? But how to meet her despair? Love to her was life; there was a depth of passionate abandonment in her soul which lessons of prudence never could reach; there was no worldliness, no calculation about her; she could smilingly sacrifice every thing to love, and bear long years of trial with a sublime patience, if *he* were at her side, and she could be a blessing to him. She was no longer the exultant being she was upon the evening of her arrival home.

The hour grew late, and I grew weary, and sought repose. I had not retired many minutes before Grace came in. She glanced at the bed, but did not say any thing to me. There was a fire in her eyes, as if she were deeply excited, and the treacherous scarlet of anguish glowed upon her cheek. Low sighs trembled from her lips; she sank upon a chair by the dressing-table, and leaned her head upon her hand in an attitude of intense study and thought. At last she shook her head slowly and murmured, "Oh, no! it cannot be!" and then with hasty action she fell upon her knees, and remained long in prayer, as if wrestling with the destroying angel, and beseeching him to pass by. When she arose, I saw that she had been drowned in tears.

CHAPTER VI.

"Ma, can't we go to Lilly's school this afternoon?" pleaded Josephine, running out on the back piazza, where we all sat sewing. "Do you believe, Mr. Bedell lectures there this afternoon on chemistry—don't he, Lilly?" appealing to that little damsel, who stood in the door, looking curiously into Mrs. Rodman's face to see the effect of Josephine's request.

"He does; and he has lectured before," returned Lilly. "May the girls go?"

"Is it possible James understands chemistry so well?" I asked.

"Walter says he is an unusual student," answered cousin Mary. "He has more energy than I supposed, to dare to give public lectures."

"May we go, mother?" again asked Josey, putting on her most seducing look. "Visitors are always invited Friday afternoons, and this is Friday."

"You may go." With the welcome assurance, the children bounded out of sight instantly.

"Let *us* go, Grace," said I, hoping to lighten the depression she strove to conceal.

"Perhaps you would like to go, Mary?" she said, looking at her sister. Mary declined; so Grace and I started away with the children. We nodded in reply to Mrs. Rod-

man's charge to keep the children in order. Lilly Cardover began to play pranks as soon as she left the door, delighting Josephine beyond measure, who laughed until she was as red as a cherry. We recommended more propriety, while inwardly enjoying the delicious *abandon* of the little ones. Cousin Mary was so particular in the deportment of her children, it did my heart good to hear the laughter ringing out from Josephine's merry soul. Gertrude walked by herself, at a little distance, every now and then casting reproving glances upon the joyous children, and saying

"I never saw such children. I am ashamed to walk with them. Josey! Josephine Rodman! How you *do* act!"

During such remarks a dead silence would prevail a second; Josey's hands would cover her mouth, while her merry eyes turned to Lilly; then came a new and altogether unconquerable explosion of mirth.

"Let them be happy," said Grace, in a low voice; "they have elements of suffering within them that will be developed soon enough."

We reached the school-house and entered the hall; the lecture had begun. Lilly dragged the children in the lecture-room with her as noiselessly as possible. Recalling Mr. Bedell's bashfulness, Grace and I hesitated about interrupting him. The door was partly ajar; we could hear distinctly a strong sensible voice, delivering explanations in a modest but assured manner; there was something in those tones that instantly convinced me that Mr. Bedell was not an ordinary young man. I looked at Grace with a sort of pride; her satisfied smile indicated the same feeling. At length the teacher espied us, and politely came to us to conduct us to a seat. When we had fairly ceased fluttering, and were ready to attend to the speaker, we became conscious that he was merely saying, "However—and—however—" while he looked

very red and miserable: he crossed one foot over the other, then crossed back again. He drank a glass of water, and with a new effort commenced: "You will see that this is a"—he paused, and took up a glass in which were different colored liquids; with a nervous hand he poured something into the glass from a vial; then he put a lid on. In a moment there was an explosion; simultaneous shrieks arose from every part of the room; pieces of glass whizzed around and settled every where; the knob of the cover planted itself in the ceiling; the audience gave a bound towards the door, but when it was perceived that no great harm was done, the seats were resumed amid universal merriment. Lilly Cardover extracted a fragment of glass from her nose, and stanched the wound with a small piece of black silk. Mr. Bedell's white vest was adorned with red and green, also his face.

"Rather an unfortunate accident!" he said, as a constrained smile flitted over his variegated countenance.

Grace and I took Lilly out to doctor her wound ostensibly, but in reality to give vent to bursts of laughter. Grace dropped on the door-step, and laughed until her strength was gone, saying every other moment, "I am so sorry we came." When our composure was restored, she added, "Ah, Kate! what execution your eyes have done to-day! That explosion was a symbol of the state of his heart."

"*My* eyes?" I exclaimed, "it was your own!"

"Mine!" and she lifted her eyebrows in smiling derision. I had long suspected that Grace was more dear to James than she should be; often I had seen him following her every movement, and then with sudden resolution he would turn away his eyes, perhaps to seize a book, or perchance his hat, in order to leave the house. One evening Walter had said to me, "I think Mr. Benzoni and Grace are not suited to each other!" James sat by, and instantly a flush overspread his face. I did not speak of the certainty I felt that

James loved Grace; it could do no good, for she was insensible to all save one. Yet I secretly hoped that James would gradually win away Grace's interest from her lover; if she supposed he only entertained friendship for her, she would not be on her guard against him.

"What are you studying about, Kate?" she asked, as these thoughts were passing through my mind. "This revelation has made you very profound. Do you *care* for him, Kate?"—she whispered the last sentence.

"No, and never will," I replied quickly. "He does not care for me, except as a sincere friend."

She smiled, and looked incredulous. Miss Holmes, the principal teacher, came out on the porch to talk with us. Lilly slipped away the moment she appeared. Miss Holmes observed it, and said: "Lilly seems to be a little fearful of me yet. She was so wild when she first came to school I was obliged to be rather strict with her."

"Is she studious?" I asked.

"She has a taste for some branches; for drawing she has a positive talent. I am sorry our teacher is going to leave us soon."

"Have you another engaged?" I inquired with sudden interest.

"We have not." At this moment some visitors approached to speak with Miss Holmes about their respective children, so Grace and I took our leave. Before leaving the front door, however, we looked far up the street to see if we should encounter James; we preferred that he should have time to compose his nerves before meeting with him. He was not in sight, and we sallied forth.

We had not gone many steps when we encountered Mr. Waldron, our minister. His eyes were instantly riveted upon Grace, but he merely touched his hat and passed on. He had called once at our house, but we were absent.

"Isn't he handsome and spiritual-looking, Grace?" I asked, as the benison of his look was withdrawn.

"Yes, he is indeed. One would think from his countenance that he must utter just such soul-refreshing words as he does in the pulpit."

"I think," I said, "the reason his face is so attractive, is because it is the index of his soul. You know sometimes the most charming characters have faces that do them great injustice; we do not love them until we learn all that is beyond the face."

"Very true," returned Grace. I thought within myself that *her* face was charming, because it spoke forth the artlessness and purity within her.

"Do you intend to apply for that situation as drawing-teacher, Kate?"

"Yes. I shall send Miss Holmes a note to-morrow."

"You know what we were talking about the other evening, Kate?" Grace said, looking in my eyes.

"Yes; relative to Mr. Rodman's business."

"It is all true what we feared, Kate. John is on the verge of bankruptcy; he is dreadfully in debt. Mary told me this morning. He has neglected his business during the past year to speculate in something, I hardly know what, and all his means are swallowed up."

"Will he never be able to pay his debts?" I asked, horrified at such a state of things.

"I don't know. Isn't it discouraging? We have always lived in perfectly puritanical style, that John might use all his funds in making more money. Now it proves that we might have enjoyed life much better, and at this time we would not be robbing others of their own. I always felt that it was a great mistake in John to be for ever looking to the future, instead of making the present bright and cheery; the proceeds of his business, two years ago, were amply sufficient

to supply the family with every want, and even with a great many luxuries; and then he had a surplus for the poor, and something to lay aside. It is so hard to be reconciled when misfortune is brought about by an unwise policy. Still," and Grace looked up with determined faith, "I am perfectly confident that this misfortune will be better for all of us than prosperity."

"What does Mary say?" I inquired.

"She speaks like an angel," Grace returned with passionate affection. "She says in the depths of her aching anxiety there is a hope that some celestial wealth will reach John through this thwarting of his plans. She besought me to be patient with him, for he suffers acutely, and he has for a long time."

"We *will* strive to make home serene and tranquil to him," I said with a sudden enthusiasm. "I can make allowance for his moodiness now. I wish I had always felt as Cousin Mary does the worth of his soul." We reached home, talking quietly, earnestly, tearfully. A holier link seemed to bind my heart to the family as grief drew near, and developed the still, strong sweetness of Cousin Mary's nature.

CHAPTER VII.

The next day I despatched a note and a few specimens of my drawings to Miss Holmes. Josephine was my note-bearer. On her return, she handed me a little billet saying that Miss Holmes was well suited with the specimens I sent her, and would decide by the next day between myself and another lady; she feared I would not be satisfied with the salary, which would be but fifty dollars a year. I read the note with satisfaction; the salary was as much as I expected. I should not miss the time devoted to teaching, it would be a change from sewing. I felt quite confident of my success in obtaining the situation, the opening seemed so providential at this juncture. The ensuing morning I listened for the postman's rap with eagerness and transient misgivings. At length the knocker sounded. I hastened to the door, and received a note bearing these words:

"I regret, Miss Hamilton, to state that the situation you desired is taken by a personal friend of mine whom I could not refuse.

"Yours, most truly,

"Jane Holmes."

It was a very severe disappointment at this time. I stole into the parlor that I might digest my distress alone. I had pleased myself with thinking that I should now be able to

pay more for my board, thus showing Cousin Mary that I appreciated all her nameless kindnesses to me. I dropped my face in my hands, and was just on the point of having a good crying spell, when a familiar voice exclaimed,

"Miss Kate!" and Mr. Cardover stood by me.

"I didn't see you," I said, with some embarrassment, for it was very unpleasant to stop crying at the outset.

"Because you were reading your letter as you came in," he returned. "I am sorry to disturb you. I was waiting for Mr. Rodman."

"It's no matter," I answered. Then thinking he might suppose some great calamity had overtaken me, I said,

"This note is from a lady who has disappointed a plan of mine. It is not very serious. I will see if Mr. Rodman is at home."

Mr. Cardover looked at me half-inquiringly, half-hesitatingly. "Could I advance your plans in any way?" he asked very kindly, yet with a delicacy that I felt. "I am aware of Mr. Rodman's difficulties."

"I hoped to become a teacher of drawing and painting," I said.

"Ah!" he returned quickly. "Will you show me your pictures? I think I can very easily be of service to you."

I hurried to the nursery for my drawings with a suddenly lightened heart. I felt somewhat ashamed of them, for I had a very exalted idea of Mr. Cardover's taste and judgment.

"I have not taken lessons but three months," I said as I returned to the parlor and laid them before him. "I should try very hard to improve."

He looked carefully over the lot without saying any thing for a few moments.

"You will paint well, Miss Kate, with care and practice," he said at last.

My heart gave a delighted bound. I had never excelled in any thing, and it came upon me as a surprise that I could at some time accomplish something which Mr. Cardover would think well done.

"Would you like to paint for me?" he asked.

"You are very kind," I returned, "but my insignificant pictures would not look very well beside the fine ones you offer for sale. I should be very glad to paint for you, but—" I colored painfully, for a new thought struck me.

"But what?"

"I am afraid you do not care about the pictures, only to help me."

"You are entirely mistaken there, Miss Kate. You saw the other day when you visited my store with Grace that I kept all kinds. I had some similar to these. I will lend you good models, and I do not doubt that I shall find your pictures indispensable in time. Will you enter into an arrangement?" he asked, smiling. "Shall I send you some models to-morrow?"

"If you please. I thank you with all my heart," I said smiling, for his cordial manner assured me.

"You must regard your work as a constant study; you must improve on every picture for your own sake, will you?"

"Oh, I *will!* I shall try to compose pictures when I have had more practice."

"That is right."

Mr. Rodman here came in, and I went up stairs to relate my happy fortune to Grace. Ere I sat down to finish my sewing, I could not resist the pleasure of bringing in a little table, and placing it under the windows to paint on; then, with a new zeal, I looked over my pencils, brushes and paints, and placed them all in order on the table; then I laid out different sized sheets of drawing-paper, musing the while

upon my new and beloved vocation. Lastly, I placed a chair before the table, and seated myself in it, to see how it would seem when I began to draw in the morning.

"That will do," said Grace laughing. "Come and sew now."

We sewed, and conversed upon the prospects of the family until dinner-time. When we descended to that meal, Mr. Cardover was still closeted with Mr. Rodman in the parlor. Cousin Mary cast occasional anxious glances towards the door. After Mr. Bedell and Walter had gone, she said, "John learned this morning that his losses are less than he supposed; he hopes to get through his difficulties without a failure."

"Will he?" Grace and I asked eagerly.

"No, he cannot," said Cousin Mary, decidedly. "It will merely be vexation of spirit for him to put off the evil day. I know that Mr. Cardover will advise him rightly, but I fear John will not take the advice."

At night Grace told me the substance of Mr. Cardover's business with Mr. Rodman. He proposed advancing funds for James to buy Cousin John out. Then he spoke of a lucrative situation which Mr. Rodman might take as bookkeeper in a large mercantile house. The proposition was rejected with many thanks; the unfortunate man thought he saw a way through his troubles.

"What do you suppose he asked me?" said Grace, looking very wretched.

"I don't know."

"He asked me for my little pittance as a loan: my thousand dollars."

"Oh! what *did* you do?"

"I refused it!" Grace covered her face with her hands, and wept. "It was such a trial, Kate; but Mary had told me but a short time before not to let him have it.

She said it could do him no good, and it might be all we should have to rely upon: I spoke of his taking it when she first told me of his troubles. It cut me to the heart so, to see John's look of surprise and pain. I told him I feared the family might need it.

"'You might rely upon me to look after my family!' he said very bitterly.

"'O forgive me, John,' I said; 'it is not selfishness that makes me keep it from you!'

"He turned angrily away and left the room. I shall dread to meet him now. Mr. Bedell told Mary he wished she would advise her husband not to attempt to get through; it would be far better for him to stop short at once."

I dreaded an accession to Mr. Rodman's gloom. The next morning he treated Grace with a frigidity of demeanor that sent the painful color from her heart to her face, and back again. At dinner it was the same; a sort of savage spirit seemed to have taken possession of him, a dark despair against which he madly yet vainly fought: he glanced at us like a lion at bay. If we spoke cheerfully, we instantly felt as if he regarded it as treason; if we were silent and grave, it irritated him. Thus weeks passed in a miserable constraint under his presence; our warm hopes of cheering him, by showing him that his home should be a refuge from strife, failed. We could not please him; our only effort was not to offend him.

One morning, as I entered the dining-room, I heard Cousin John exclaim, in an excited tone, "Every thing is gone now!" He was pacing up and down: he struck his forehead with his hand, groaning, "O God, it is too much!"

His wife was weeping: she could not comfort him; she could not brighten the darkness by her devotion. Woman's holiest compensation was taken from her; she must suffer, and not lessen her anguish by soothing his.

"Let us have breakfast!" said Cousin John abruptly, as he saw me. Cousin Mary went to her room to conceal her red eyes; I took up a paper to wait for her. Mr. Rodman asked, "Are the children ready?"

"They are, I believe," I answered.

"Is Grace ready? James and Walter are waiting." Grace entered at the instant.

"Ring the bell for the breakfast to be brought in," he pursued. "We will not wait for Mrs. Rodman." The meal passed in constrained silence: Walter and James ate as speedily as possible, and went away; so did the children. Mr. Rodman finished, and went to his wife's room for his hat. As he was coming out, she hastened to the door and said, gently,

"John, I must speak with you one moment about ——" he shut the door almost directly in her face, and stalked out of the house without a word. Grace's eyes flashed lightning; then she murmured, "O Mary, Mary! poor sister!" and burst into a passion of pitying tears. After a moment she looked up, and said, "He deserves his misfortune: he tramples upon her loving heart as if it were the dust of the ground: he thinks it a light crime to murder all her innocent peace. He has long desolated her life. Kate! sometimes it seems as if my heart would burst, when I hear him speak to her as he does always harshly and coldly. She was so lovingly nurtured. Once I besought him with torrents of tears to speak more gently to her: I told him he was killing her with hard and careless words. And I think he was more thoughtful after that."

"I suppose he does not at all realize the amount of suffering he inflicts," I said.

"I suppose not," returned Grace, sighing; "we must bear with him. The angels count the good in human hearts, and try to overlook the evil. Let us hope yet for him."

Cousin Mary came from her room; her eyes were swollen with weeping, and her face was pale, but from her calm look we knew that she had been to Him who gives rest to the weary and heavy laden. A new strength shone from her countenance. She sat down beside us.

"Will you have some coffee, dear?" asked Grace, pouring out a cup: her lips quivered as she did so.

Cousin Mary only shook her head in the negative: she dared not trust her eyes to meet those of Grace, or her calmness would have been overcome. "The end has come at last," she said, speaking hastily. "We are worse than nothing. His house is sold. John has given up every thing. He is a beggar this morning. It would not be very hard to bear if others would not lose by him."

"Shall we move?" asked Grace.

"No; Mr. Waldron has bought the house; he does not wish to use it. He resides out of the city in the summer."

"How shall we live?" asked Grace. "What will John do!"

"It will take him some time to settle up his business. Walter and James propose still boarding with us. Then Kate we have. I shall help you with your sewing, Grace, and perhaps I can earn a little in that way. I shall send poor Sally away this morning, and little John also. The children must work more than they have ever done before."

"It will be an excellent thing for them!" said Grace. "We must teach them to sew with us sometimes, too. We can tell them stories to beguile the tediousness of labor. We shall get along nicely, if we retain our health. Keep up a strong heart, Mary, and lean upon Kate and me. We will all exercise about the house, and then sit down to our sedentary labor together. I dare say we shall enjoy our new way of living very much. We shall have the consolation of knowing that we are useful. We shall love each other bet-

ter if we share our cares, and interests, and hopes together, won't we Kate?" And she took my hand and laid it with her own upon the hand of Cousin Mary.

"Yes, indeed!" I returned. We kissed each other fervently, and a threefold cord bound us together. It was very consoling to me to see that Grace and Cousin Mary regarded me as one of them in their trouble; they comprehended how I felt: how precious it was to me to be closely linked with home; its cares were sweet compared with isolation. Now that we had absolutely reached the bottom of the hill, and could find out our true position and duties, we began to feel strong and courageous. It was like a breath of healing both to Grace and myself, to cheer in a thousand little ways Cousin Mary in her thorny path. Yet oftentimes the change in the family circumstances came to our consciousness with a very unpleasant sensation. Sally had been a host in herself; she had a peculiar way of doing work, so that it seemed as if it was the easiest thing in the world: she never burned any thing, and always had every thing ready at the same moment. For a week or two after she left Cousin Mary, Grace and I labored incredibly at dinner time to do as well as she did, but we seated ourselves at the table, with very red faces, and with a total lack of repose of manner. When Gertrude went to the kitchen to wash the dishes, the fire had unaccountably gone out, and the dish-water was not on. Gradually, however, order and system were introduced; we had fewer plans to discuss, and practice rendered us swift and efficient. We at last began to wonder how we could have been satisfied with some of Sally's careless ways.

CHAPTER VIII.

The house was very quiet. Cousin Mary and Grace had gone out with the children, and I sat alone, painting,—and thinking. My thoughts reverted with a painful tenacity to the evening before; although with a bitter and disdainful effort I had wrenched them from the subject more than once, still with a fresh pang the scene of the evening before struck my remembrance. It was a very simple scene. Mr. Cardover stood by Judith Morton's chair and leaned over, speaking to her with eager, suppressed pleasure: I felt that she was enchantingly lovely to him. I had never thought or dreamed of him except as a very kind friend; yet as I looked at them, a new and powerful influence swept through my soul; if I had been alone I could have wept with a wild sense of bereavement. I had not seen them together for many weeks. I had imagined that Judith appeared to him, as she had for a long time appeared to our family, stripped of her fascinations. I had scarcely thought of them in connection of late. Since our misfortune, Mr. Cardover and his sister had visited us a great deal: the former had lent me many delightful and useful books to read. He had seemed kindly interested in my improvement. One evening when he came in, I was reading a very fascinating but useless romance. He looked at it, then suddenly closing it with a smile, he said, "Is it a good plan to read this, sister Kate?"

"I won't finish it!" I replied, and from that moment he had seemed to me like an elder brother. One memory after another stole upon me as I sat at work: I was so unspeakably lonely. It had never before seemed difficult to live without being an object of supreme affection to some one; but now how dreary the prospect! The passionate tears dropped heavily upon my picture. All these new miserable thoughts rushed upon me in a flood. I pushed back my chair and wept in utter abandonment. "These are the first and last tears!" I murmured: their flow eased the aching at my heart: then I sunk upon my knees in prayer: the intensity of my supplication brought a sweet sensation of peace: for the first time in my life the curtain seemed lifted from destiny, and I realized that suffering was for the sake of bringing infinite good to the soul. All things seemed changed to me: I saw that it was selfish in me to be repining over my lot, instead of blessing God that I could brighten the lot of others. So I went to work again, tranquilly, sadly, resignedly: there was a weary hush in my spirit after its late agitation. An hour glided on, then I heard some one pacing up and down below stairs: I went to the banister, and listened: it was not Mr. Rodman's step, and I went down. I opened the parlor door: it was Walter; his cheeks were in a flame. I was about retiring, when he looked at me with a more observant glance than at first. Perhaps he suspected I had been weeping, for he said very gently,

"Will you come in, Kate?"

"Do you want me?" I inquired, seeing an expression of anguish in his face. "Can I help you, Walter?"

He merely motioned with his hand for me to enter. I did so, closing the door after me. He sat down in a chair, covered his face with both hands a moment, then, with a calmness I could not bear to see, he whispered, "Kate, I am very miserable."

His tone touched the chord so lately vibrating in my own heart. "Why?" I asked, and I laid my hand on his shoulder: I was not in a mood to retain my composure, and the too ready tears began to fall.

"Judith has rejected me!" he responded in an accent of deepest pain. "I loved her so well, Kate, so faithfully: it was without measure. I poured out all the wealth of my heart upon her. But now the golden bowl is broken: my youth"—— a sudden gush of tears came to his relief: we both wept very, very hard. At length he said, "There was such a dreadful strain upon my heart, I think it would have burst, without these tears. I was thinking of self-murder when you came in, Kate; I was wishing it was not sinful."

"Oh, Walter! think how much good you may yet do: think that many may yet heap upon your head the blessings of those ready to perish."

"No—no!" he said slowly; "I am like one shipwrecked: every thing is gone, hope, zeal, trust; only a wretched cowardice is left: I shudder to walk the path of life myself, how then can I help others?"

"You will not always feel as you do now: you may love again."

"Never!" he quickly answered; "such mad worship comes but once; such wild idolatry. I thought she surely loved me; I thought I read it in her smiles, in her eyes, in her voice; and yet the stroke of fear fell upon my spirit whenever I thought of asking her to be my wife. I did to-day! She said she had never dreamed that I entertained such sentiments towards her."

"That was a falsehood!" I said, with an inward glow of anger. "She is not worthy of you, Walter. It is better for you that your destiny is not bound up with hers: she would have made you unhappy!"

"Oh, no! happy, happy! happier than I shall ever be again."

"Perhaps you will some time meet some gentle angel just suited to pour consolation into the wounds of your heart; one who will exalt your whole nature. Judith would have dragged you downward."

"You do not understand her, Kate!"

"Well, dear Walter, then I will not speak of her. I will only hope that your heart will turn to one who is never deaf to the pangs and wants of our spirits." For a long time Walter was silent. Then he arose and took his flute; he poured forth the saddest strains that ever came from a despairing heart. Lilly Cardover, who had come to visit the children, softly opened the door and stole into the room: she looked at Walter with a sorrowful expression in her great eyes; she advanced to where he sat, and dropped on a cricket at his feet, still gazing, still listening to the strain. She saw how sad we both looked, and a lovely sympathy overspread her countenance. When he paused, she said, pleadingly, "Not such music, if you please; it makes my heart ache!"

"Not such!" answered Walter, looking in her tender countenance; "not such, darling child?" He bent over and kissed her beautiful eyes, her soft lips; then he played more cheerful airs, while Lilly leaned her head against his knee, and listened quietly.

Day after day Walter's pale, miserable face appeared at table, but he did not seem disposed to enter into conversation with any one. He seemed to be brooding upon one thought only. Grace seemed as cheerful as of yore. Mr. Benzoni did not call quite as frequently as formerly, but he was often absent from the city on business. He did not ask us to go into Judith's any more, nor did she come into our house as often as formerly; he seemed to have lost his interest in her, and Grace was deeply relieved. I think it was gratitude for her delivery from the suspicion that he was interested in Judith that made her cheerful, even although

his manners had not quite the tenderness of old; she was strong in the hope of winning back old times.

One afternoon when the sun shone gloriously upon the glittering snow, I sallied out with a little roll of paintings to Mr. Cardover's store. When I reached it he was just stepping into a sleigh.

"You are just in time, Kate!" he said, with his bright smile, stepping out again on the sidewalk. "I was just going to drive to the stable. Now I shall have the pleasure of taking you home."

"Thank you. Isn't it a magnificent day?" I returned. We entered the store; he looked at my pictures, commented upon them very freely, and commended the care I had taken with them. He then handed down a very beautiful oil painting for me to copy; it was a small picture, and we stowed it away in the sleigh. After wrapping up in buffalo robes we started.

"Have you been sleigh-riding before this winter, Kate?" he asked.

"No! I have not."

"Then we will drive out of the city a little distance, if it would be agreeable to you."

"I should like it," I said, for the bracing air and rapid motion was exhilarating.

"What is the matter with Walter lately?" inquired Mr. Cardover; "he looks so wretched and haggard!"

"He is not very well, I believe," I answered.

"And very low-spirited?" pursued Mr. Cardover.

"Yes, he seems to be."

"Does he attend to his music?"

"Oh yes! Sometimes he plays on the organ in the church until twelve o'clock at night; and half the time without any fire. Grace and I go to the church sometimes. Grace likes to play on that organ."

"Walter's business affairs do not trouble him?"

"Oh, I think not."

"His dress is very careless. He looks as if he had not shaved in a month!"

I saw that Mr. Cardover was determined to ascertain the cause of Walter's miserable mental condition, so I said,

"He had previously taken unusual pains with his dress; I suppose you know what that indicates."

"No! What?"

"Young gentlemen express the tender passion by new vests and cravats. He has thrown his embroidered cravats away!"

"He has been disappointed?"

"Yes, sir."

"By Miss Morton?"

"Yes."

Mr. Cardover was silent some moments, then he said, "I have heard Miss Morton called a coquette."

"Ah!" then I added, "How white the snow is in the centre of the road, compared with what it is in the city."

"Yes, very. I never thought she was," he continued, as if I had not tried to turn the conversation.

"Was what?' I asked a little maliciously.

"I never thought Miss Morton was a coquette," he returned, with a slightly embarrassed manner. "She obeys the impulse of the moment, and is kind, perhaps, when her kindness is dangerous. I never supposed she was attached to Walter."

"No, I did not."

"You did not? Are you intimate with her?" and he glanced at me eagerly.

"No, sir."

"Is Grace?"

"No, sir."

"I supposed you were together a great deal."

"No! She used to come in to see us more frequently than she does now."

"Do you go to see her as much as you used to?"

"No, sir."

"Why not?"

"I don't like her!" I spoke with an emphasis I regretted, for Mr. Cardover looked at me as if I was less amiable than he had imagined.

"Is it right for you to indulge such feelings?" he gravely asked.

"I suppose not," I answered, and I felt that the color had leaped into my cheek; the old pang awoke in my heart; I had believed it was gone for ever.

"Why do you dislike her, Kate?" he asked more mildly.

"Because I cannot help it."

"Others see in her a great deal to admire and love!"

"I know many do admire her and love her."

"She seems to me to possess a *heavenliness* of character, if I may coin a word, that I have never seen in any one else: she has an impromptu grace, a naturalness that is irresistible: she always speaks so gently to her parents, to her brother; it betrays a delicate and loving nature. I am sure a most noble heart lies beneath her mirthful manner."

Alas! lovers always think alike. I had long since learned from casual remarks dropped by Frank Morton, that Judith did not study the happiness of her family; but I remained silent, for I thought my remarks would be attributed to prejudice. At this moment we turned around. Mr. Cardover's attention was directed to the horses: A sleigh passed us, holding a lady and gentleman. I had but a glimpse of them; they looked strangely like Mr. Benzoni and Judith. I turned around very eagerly; I could not be certain, for twilight was gathering around us, but the white bonnet and

waving plume were like Miss Morton's. What could it mean? Had my excited imagination deceived me? The crescent moon was rising in the deeply blue sky; the great leafless trees lifted their giant forms above the snowy ground, and pointed to the star-lighted firmament. Still sounded the softly jingling bells; still we went on with a swift, gliding motion; on we went, until we reached home, and still I was in a maze.

When I saw Grace awaiting Mr. Benzoni in the parlor, I looked at her with deep pity. It was two weeks since he had been to see her; she supposed he had been absent from the city. Had he? I feared a dreadful truth was to burst upon her. After tea I hastened to our chamber, and sat pondering the subject. I could not approach her with a surmise, and yet in my heart there grew a faith as powerful as knowledge could have been, that she was forsaken. Storm after storm came beating upon the household hearts; most terrible of all was this last storm upon the head of Grace. The quiet night hours passed on, and still she kept her watch. When the city clocks struck twelve, I heard her ascending the stairs. I seized a book, and bent over it. I was still wondering whether I had best tell her my fears; but the patient sadness on her face as she opened the door took away all courage.

"I thought Giovanni would certainly be here to-night," she said. "I wish he was not obliged to go out of the city so often."

"You must remember business comes before love with gentlemen, Grace. It happens so after the novelty has gone by."

An expression of pain passed over her countenance. I did not speak heartlessly; I wished she might learn to look for less affection from him.

"Divide your heart a little more with us, Grace. I love

you beyond all power of words to tell!" and I put my arms around her, and kissed her trembling lips.

"Do you, dear Kate?" she asked in a soothed voice She laid her face on my shoulder, and wept very quietly. "Oh," she murmured, "I wish I were not so exacting; I wish I were not always hungering for affection; I used to feel at rest when he first loved me, Kate. During this last week it has seemed every night more than I could bear, that he did not come; but I suppose he cannot."

"Think of poor Walter!" I said. "You ought to think of cheering him. To-morrow let us resolve to break the gloom on his face; he has mourned long enough now."

"I have scarcely thought of amusing him," said Grace.

"Then let us begin to-morrow, and see if we cannot succeed better than we did with Cousin John."

"Well," she replied.

CHAPTER IX.

The next morning Mr. Rodman was prostrated on a bed of sickness; he had a very severe attack of rheumatism, and like most men who have enjoyed excellent health, he thought his sufferings greater than had ever been endured by mortal before. We all flew hither and thither to wait on him, and pity gathered in our hearts as we saw his strong spirit chafe under his untoward destiny. He feared he should never recover sound health, and he looked upon the future awaiting the family with anxiety. Already we had broken into Grace's little fortune. Now began more retrenchments; we gave up a fire in the nursery, and Grace and I left our large pleasant room, to spend our time by the dining-room fire. Mr. Bedell always came in with cheerful words and smiles, and predicted that "the fortunes of our house" should rise again. When Walter left the dinner-table upon the first day of change, he gave me a very significant look. I followed him into the hall.

"What is it, Walter?"

"Let us go into the nursery a moment," he said; "we shall be interrupted here."

We did so; and then Walter said, "Mr. Benzoni loves Judith Morton. He is faithless to our Grace."

"Oh!" I exclaimed, "dreadful!" But Walter went on

with his story: "I was walking out of town, where there are no houses; I hardly knew where I went, and I did not care. I sat down on a pile of boards, near a new house that was building. After awhile I saw a gentleman walk slowly along the road, and pause occasionally, as if waiting for some one. It was Mr. Benzoni. An omnibus soon passed, and a lady alighted; it was Judith. She took Mr. Benzoni's arm, and they went out of sight; but I saw him clasp her hand, and look down in her face, as if life hung on her words; as I used to look, I suppose." And he laughed bitterly.

"Oh! what shall we do?"

"You must tell Grace immediately."

"Perhaps she will not believe it. Why does Mr. Benzoni use such deception?"

"Probably," returned Walter, musingly, "he will marry Judith before long."

"How shall I break it to Grace?"

"God knows!"

"Do you regret that cruel Judith, now, Walter?"

"I do not regret *her*,—I regret my wasted heart; regret that I can never be so rich in hope and joy as before I knew her. I regret the vision that has died. I would give all the world contains, if I owned it, to start in life with the feelings I had a few months ago."

"I think you will be happy again, some time. It is dreadful to lose happiness at the very outset of life; it seems so long before we can rest in heaven. But there is a heaven, Walter; keep your eye fixed on that hope; think that every day may bring you one day nearer to it."

"But every day does not bring me nearer to it; some days I near hell."

"Oh! why will you? Why not start for heaven in these miserable hours when earthly hopes have failed? Why not rise conqueror from this cruel battle? Why not owe

eternal happiness to this blow from the hand of Judith? Why not extract honey from this poison-flower resting on your heart? Why take poison alone, and seek no good in it?"

"Why, indeed? Kate, I have prayed of late as I never prayed before,—prayed for a little rest. I have cried for it with my whole heart. Sometimes it comes. I wish I *could* stay my soul upon God. Poor Grace! she did not need such suffering; why must she have it?"

"I think her eternal future must require it, or she would not be called upon to suffer. I must go to her."

She was in the dining-room alone. I sat down near her, and took up my brush to paint.

"Grace," I said, after collecting my thoughts, and my voice trembled, "do you think that you and Mr. Benzoni are suited to each other?"

She looked at me with a timorous gaze; her heart took alarm. "Why are we not suited to each other?"

"You are devoted to heavenly things, and he to earthly things! I have thought sometimes that one might suppose him an atheist, from his conversation."

"Oh, no! Kate; how could you ever have drawn such inferences?"

"He said one day that he acknowledged no God but his own will."

"It was a careless way of speaking; I do not think he thought so in his secret heart. Perhaps I may, under God, be the means of making him a Christian. Would not that be worth every thing?"

"Yes; if it could be so. But he might make you like himself, very worldly. You know, Grace, that you catch the influence of others' feelings very easily."

"I know it! but God is strong enough to shield me in the path of duty."

"If you and Mr. Benzoni are not really congenial, do you think it would be your duty to marry him?"

"Yes! I think it is right that I should give my hand with my heart,—my whole life will be a prayer for his highest good. Why should I not be his wife? We are congenial."

"No, dear Grace, you are not."

"Oh! Kate, please never speak to me of this. I know you mean very kindly by me; but you cannot change me, and it makes me so wretched to hear you. If it were not sinful, I would sooner go to hell with Mr. Benzoni than to heaven without him."

She covered her face with her hands, and the tears rolled down between her fingers. "No!" she said, "I have never seen any great duty yet, that I could not force myself to perform; I could go to the stake and be burned, I know I could; that would be easy. God *could* not require of me what I could not perform."

"Darling, you must give Mr. Benzoni up: it is your duty."

"Kate! what do you mean?"

"He does not love you, Grace! he is unworthy of you!"

She looked at me with a smile; a smile more dreadful than the wildest weeping; it parted her white rigid lips with derision, then it passed rapidly away: a fear of the truth had stayed the blood at her heart. "How do you know that he does not love me?" she asked, whisperingly.

"I think he loves Judith Morton!"

"Oh, intolerable!" she groaned, and she buried her face in her hands upon her work-table. Cousin Mary came in ere long; Grace arose and went up stairs. After the lapse of an hour I followed her. She lay prone upon the carpet.

"Grace! Grace!" I entreated, smoothing her hair, which had fallen down.

"Don't speak to me!" she returned; "I am God-forsaken!"

"You will take your death-cold here!" I continued.

"I hope I may!"

"Oh, Grace, have you forgotten poor Mary and all her cares? There never was a time when your life was so needed in the family as now. Do not give way now."

She slowly arose; her eyes were dry and tearless; one would scarcely have believed that devouring anguish was preying upon her heart, she was so calm. She mechanically arranged her beautiful hair, and then followed me down stairs. All the afternoon she sewed quietly; but she responded to our questions with a quick, almost sharp impatience. At evening, when we went to our room, she said,

"Kate, tell me about it. Has he communicated with you? Has he sent me any message?"

"No," I said; "Walter saw him meet Judith out of town!"

"Then I do not believe he is faithless to me; Walter was mistaken. How often do we mistake people. Giovanni is not capable of such base deception; he is the soul of frankness. I have felt upon consideration this afternoon, that it was not in keeping with his character to wilfully deceive me. I acknowledge that he did at one time seem pleased with Judith, but he has seemed more than indifferent when we have met her of late. I am sure he has discovered her character, and that he does not esteem her more than we do."

"But, Grace, the other day, when I was riding with Mr. Cardover, I thought I saw them in a sleigh together."

She pressed her lips together as if a mortal pang had seized her. I began to unbind my hair, but she still stood motionless in the middle of the floor. "Are you sure it was Giovanni and Judith you saw?" she at length asked, lifting up her large eyes, and riveting them upon me.

"I am not certain, but I think so."

"Kate, how *could* you kill me with mere suspicion! How natural a thing it would be, in a city like this, for two persons to bear some resemblance to them. I see no reasonable foundation for the agony you have caused me: it is cruelly unjust to Mr. Benzoni. He will be here to-night, and in the morning I shall satisfy you that you have not judged him kindly."

"And you intend to let him deceive you longer?" I was excited, and did not speak as gently as I should have done to such a broken heart. She only gave me a look that said, "Forbear!"

"Grace!" I besought, "break your engagement at once! to-night, if he comes. Do not let him cast you off when he chooses. I know what the end will be. You will never marry him. Walter was not deceived: he was certain, if I am not. Even if you believe Mr. Benzoni true to you, break off with him. He believes that all men are actuated by selfishness! Beware of the cold heart that fosters a serpent like this; it would sting you to death. It is in vain for you to dream there is any suitability between you; there is not. You are worshipping a creation of your yearning heart. He can never be to you what youcrave; he is dust and ashes, nay more, he would poison your inner being, if you clung to him; he is a godless man—an atheist—he would retard your eternal progress. Rouse up your courage! resign him now! Do not cling to an estranged heart; dismiss him: let pride come to your aid!"

"I have no pride!" and around her mouth the blue paleness of anguish settled. Suddenly we heard his well-known rap. It was late in the evening. One feeling overmastered others. I could not bear that he should cast away our noble Grace; the poor satisfaction of first giving him up, my haughty instincts craved for her. She leaned against the

foot of the bed, a picture of despair. I felt that her tortured spirit could not respond to pride indeed. She looked at me and uttered, "Oh, Kate!" in a tone of exquisite suffering.

"God will support you! Ministering angels will bring you strength if you allow *nothing* to stand between you and heaven. Give him up now!"

She bowed her face upon the foot of the bed in a still silence. Perchance she prayed; then she left me. After she had gone, I realized how every word I had uttered had stabbed her to the heart, and a portion of her misery possessed me. I hastily undressed, and sought forgetfulness in sleep; the wintry moon shone into the chamber, strong, clear, and calm. I wondered if Grace would indeed break her engagement, or if Mr. Benzoni would first speak of it. I listened for a sound. I had resolved never to speak to her again on the subject, to let things have their way. I had dropped into slumber several times, and had awakened to see if Grace had come up stairs yet. Again I slept for a moment. A dim lamp-light was thrown upon my face, and a voice said,

"Oh, if this heart could be relieved by a moment of such rest."

"Oh, Grace!" and I started from my pillow. She was sitting upon the bed, looking at me; she was quite calm.

"I have something to tell you that you will be glad to hear; I will put down the lamp."

"It is cold, darling. Wrap this blanket around you."

"No; it will soon be time for me to get breakfast. I must have a duty for every moment now, Kate." She fell into thought.

"We are parted, Kate; it is all over!"

"Was he willing to have it broken off?"

"I don't know. He rested his head upon my shoulder

and wept like a child. Do you think now that I have allowed any thing to stand between me and heaven?"

"Oh, no! Grace. God will remember your suffering."

"It was right, Kate. He did not *ask* me to continue the engagement. I did not speak of Judith: I could not."

"Did you say why you parted? Did he seem surprised?" I asked.

'Yes, he did seem surprised. He colored deeply and said, 'Have you ceased to love me, Grace?' I said I had become convinced that we were not suited to each other."

"And did you remain talking until this time?"

"Oh, no! he did not stay long. I have been alone in the parlor."

She spoke so simply, so without any appeal to sympathy, it went to my heart to think of those suffering hours; and I kissed her pale cheek, with a sudden gush of tears. It did not move her, only she laid her head upon my shoulder and said, "Be my soul, my stay, for I have lost my strength." She did not weep. The light of morning broke into the chamber, but no morning light broke over her young spirit. She went down stairs; throughout the day she labored incessantly, but her face was white, and her eyes dry and haggard. Late in the afternoon I put on my bonnet to do a little shopping.

"Shall I go with you, Kate?" Grace asked, with a kind of imploring look in her eyes, as if she felt that she was not a desirable companion, and yet *must* go.

"Yes, I should like to have you; but you have been working so hard, dearest," I replied.

"I am not tired," she answered; "I want the fresh air."

We started and accomplished our errand. Grace walked fast; I understood too well that she would fain lull her mental anguish by physical activity. When we turned to-

wards home, she said, "Shall we walk out of town a little ways? Are you tired, Kate?"

"Oh, no! this air is so strong and bracing." I felt that it was a medicine to her thus to walk under the broad, free heaven, and we entered the outskirts of the city. At length I became actually tired.

"Let us rest here one moment," I said, pointing to a pile of hewn stones. She sat down, and I passed my arm around her; the faint color that had tinged her cheek slowly receded; she untied her bonnet, as if for air; then she laid her head upon my shoulder; her eyes slowly closed, she leaned upon me very heavily,—she had fainted. Blessed unconsciousness! it comes when the strained heart can bear no more. I rubbed her temples with the snow, and her hands. She soon opened her eyes, and closed them again, wearily.

"You fainted, Grace!"

'Yes," she murmured, "it came like sleep!"

"Are you better now?"

"Yes, I am so strong, Kate; too strong; I shall probably live a great while." And she smiled pitifully. I wondered how we should get home. Grace insisted that she could walk; but we were at least a mile from the city, and I was confident she was not equal to the undertaking. At this moment I saw across the open lots an omnibus driving down the next street. After resting awhile we crossed over, and took a stage home.

A few evenings after, Mr. Cardover and Mr. Waldron, who were intimate friends, came in to spend the evening. The latter, who had not fulfilled his first year of parochial duty over our church, had never before visited us socially. Once he came in the evening, and found Mr. Benzoni with Grace; after that his calls had been brief, and in the day time. Now I half imagined Mr. Cardover had persuaded

him to come. It was with difficulty that Cousin Mary prevailed on Grace to come in the parlor at all; she sat down by the window, and strove to add her share to the conversation. It turned upon life; the better life; and I thought Mr. Waldron's words penetrated Grace's soul with consolation.

"There is no thought so glorious," he said, "as the consideration that our lives may incessantly approach a destiny more and more beautiful; we can bear with faith passing trials, when we are assured that the end will not be tragical. Disappointments are not such really; they are lights set up by the way, to keep us from going down to final disappointment."

"We cannot always realize this," said Grace; "sometimes clouds shut out every thing but the present."

"True!" returned Mr. Waldron; "but the truth exists nevertheless; the sun beyond the clouds shines eternally."

Mr. Cardover made some remark, and Grace looked out of the window. I heard a footstep passing; Grace grew deadly pale, and then crimson; I knew whose footstep it must be thus to agitate her. I listened intently; it was Mr. Morton's knocker that sounded, not ours. There was a street lamp directly opposite the window where Grace was sitting; it shone upon that side of the room, and with the lamps that were burning on the mantelshelf, made it very light. She rose and took another chair; after a few moments she made a brave effort to join again in the conversation. I strove to aid her, at the risk of seeming a little impertinent. It was a relief when our guests took their leave, and yet I was glad they had come.

When we sought our room, Grace said, slowly, "Hope is extinguished; now I must overcome. He is with Judith now, Kate. Oh! God is terrible in his strength. I can scarcely drink the cup pressed to my lips."

All night she turned restlessly, sometimes moaning, sometimes clasping her arms around me, when she found I was awake, as if it would be death to have no human heart to lean upon. In the morning she said, "I am very selfish, Kate; you have hardly slept at all: forgive me that I lean upon you like a weary slave, but the spring of my life is broken. I will try to do better. I *will* not, *must* not sink." She rose, and kneeling by the bedside, abandoned herself to prayer. It was not in that heroic nature to lose the crown of victory. After this her lips were sealed for weeks; and oh! she was so gentle, so faithful in her duties, always selecting the most irksome for herself. Cousin John was slowly improving in health, but he was still miserable enough to be very restless and irritable. She listened for his wants; sometimes his sharp words cut her to the heart, as the hasty tear betrayed, and then she quietly allowed poor Mary to become weary in his service. It was clear that he had regarded Grace severely ever since she had refused to lend him her money; the fact that it had been freely spent during his illness did not appear to ameliorate his feelings. Often a look of sudden distress overspread Cousin Mary's countenance, when her husband's cold voice spoke to Grace. She felt how it fell upon her bruised heart, almost unable to sustain itself amid the deepest tenderness we could lavish upon her. One day, Mary said: "Grace is unhappy, John!" when she left the room, soon after he had carelessly responded to an offered kindness.

"She deserves no pity!" he returned. "Why did she break her engagement with Benzoni for a little jealous notion? In her circumstances it was utter folly. He is rich; she will never have another such offer."

"But if he did not love her as he ought?" suggested his wife.

"Tush! nonsense! *He* would not have broken the engagement."

"I think he would have done so, John. He now visits Judith Morton constantly."

"He would not have done so, if Grace had not discarded him. She laid too much weight upon his fancy for Judith: if it had not been for her jealousy, it would have all turned out right, and Grace might have been the wife of one of the richest men in the city."

"Wealth is poverty, compared with affection!" said Mrs. Rodman.

"Women always reason in this silly way," answered Cousin John impatiently; "I should think, by this time, experience should teach you that money is important to the enjoyment of life."

"That I do believe," answered Cousin Mary; "but money will not compensate for a nobler dower."

Mr. Rodman threw his handkerchief over his face, and settled himself in his arm-chair for a nap.

CHAPTER X.

"SHALL you go to the party to-night, Grace?" I asked a little anxiously. We had been invited to Miss Cardover's.

"Perhaps I had better stay with John," Grace returned, looking at Mary.

"Would you prefer staying at home, Grace?" Mary inquired, fixing her tender, penetrating gaze upon her sister.

"I would," was the simple response.

"Then I will go," returned Mrs. Rodman. I thought during the day her step was lighter, for the prospect of a change in the evening. It was so long that Cousin Mary had been confined to her monotonous duties, I fancied she often yearned for an hour away from home. Mr. Rodman always imagined every thing went wrong with him if his wife was absent, and therefore she remained with him; she was in fact one of the best of nurses.

When the afternoon shadows began to lengthen, Cousin Mary and I sat down to prepare a little for the party. She was mending a pair of white kid gloves, and I was rejuvenating a blue barege dress. We talked in whispers about our toilet, for we had a hidden fancy that Mr. Rodman would esteem it extremely silly in us to give a moment's thought to our appearance.

"See there, Mary," I said, stealthily showing her some

flowers I had arranged for her hair. I held them up behind Mr. Rodman's chair; he was sitting by the fire as usual.

"Oh, those are perfectly lovely!" exclaimed Cousin Mary; "but won't flowers be too gay for me?"

"No, not at all. What's the use of your imagining yourself so unspeakably ancient? Only thirty-three, and these are only white buds and green leaves; what could be more modest? Will you wear them?"

"Yes," she smilingly replied.

"Wear what? Are *you* going out to-night, Mary?" inquired her husband, abruptly turning around, and letting his glance fall upon the white gloves that lay in her lap.

"I had concluded to go to the party, John," she replied, as a shadow came over her countenance.

"Very well!" he shortly answered, wheeling round to the fire again. The bright blood flashed into Mrs. Rodman's cheek, and her lips momently met, as if with determination. Once before I had seen a sudden expression upon her countenance, that led me to think she would allow her husband's authority to go "thus far, and no farther." There had never been any thing craven in her obedience and patient gentleness. I judged that it sprung from a strong and noble resolve, and that she would also be capable of undying opposition to him, should he desire her to do that which she might esteem wrong. I often wondered if the old, romantic love still burned in her heart. How could it remain with so little to live on?

She rose with a disappointed but quiet face; the flush of anger had subsided under holier thoughts. For ten minutes she had silently pondered, as she toyed with her gloves.

"I will stay at home, John," she said briefly, yet in her gentle, half queenly way, as she took up the sewing she had laid aside for the day.

"I thought you'd come to your senses!" he returned.

Again the crimson rose in her cheek; it flooded her whole face with indignation, that he comprehended her so little; that he had no kindly word for her little sacrifice. Illness had made Mr. Rodman very selfish. I could hardly bear to have Cousin Mary stay at home, for I had learned from her animated manner that she thirsted for different scenes, new faces and new conversation, to give a fresh current to her jaded thoughts. She preferred a party at Miss Cardover's beyond all other places, for the hostess had a cordial freedom of manner that banished formality.

"Grace, will you go now?" said Cousin Mary, after a while; "you had better."

Grace consented. Evening came; Walter and James were ready to accompany us; the former looked like "patience on a monument, smiling at grief;" the latter reminded one of a bridegroom in a new coat not yet settled to his figure, so unusually dressed was he.

"May I?" said Gertrude, standing before him with a threatening gesture.

"Yes," said I, at a venture, "you may, Gerty."

She rushed her slender hand through his smooth locks, and swept them back from his white brow. We all uttered an exclamation of surprise at the improvement it made in his appearance, and extorted from him a promise always to brush his hair back.

"Why, he's real good-looking that way," said Josey, scanning his face seriously; "there isn't a freckle on his forehead!" and she danced around all rapture, until a look from Grace made her suddenly cover her mouth with a dimpled hand, and blush scarlet at the impropriety of her remark.

Grace looked very lovely; a white gossamer dress floated around her figure; the flowing sleeves were caught up, and looped at the shoulder, with a tiny pair of gold bracelets,

which she had worn when a babe. A gold pin fastened her dress at the throat. She wore the wreath of white buds and green leaves which I had made for Mary; it rested like a crown around her nobly-shaped head. There was a moonlight sweetness in her face, which had scarcely dwelt there when the richness of life abounded with her. Mr. Bedell gazed upon her with more earnest eyes than any.

"You look so beautiful, so very, very beautiful!" murmured Josephine, putting her fair arm around her waist, and looking up with worshipping eyes. Gertrude smiled her praise, and kissed her hand which she held within her own.

"Shall we go?" asked Grace abruptly. Large tears had gathered in her eyes; praise struck her heart with a pang; she should listen never more to the praise that was sweetest.

Arrived at Miss Cardover's, every thing was gay confusion; all doors stood open, even as the doors within her frank heart. Lilly Cardover ushered the gentlemen to their dressing room, and a colored servant led the way to ours. It was an ample room; a great, old-fashioned mahogany bedstead occupied one corner, draped with the purest white; the snowy window curtains flowed down with a sort of generous improvidence; the dressing bureau, washstand, and antique ewer and basin, all led the thoughts to years gone by. The portraits of Miss Cardover's parents hung on the walls; dear old people, they still looked as genial, but more withered and aged. I could not forbear looking around the room with interest; I had never been up stairs before, and in this house were spent the lives of those we loved.

A light figure came tripping into the dressing-room; I knew that graceful step. Judith stood before us; she dropped her shawl from her shoulders, and with slight confusion of manner looked at us, as if doubtful whetherewe would speak.

"Good evening," said I very coldly.

"Good evening, Miss Hamilton," she returned; then she glanced at Grace, who had grown very white. With a strong effort she mastered the anguish that seized her; she looked at Judith calmly, as she said quietly,

"Good evening, Judith." In that accent I read that there was pride in Grace's nature; she had made a powerful effort not to change her manner greatly, that her successful rival might not learn aught of the fearful tempest that had swept down upon her.

"Kate, will you button my glove?" Grace asked in the same quiet tone, but she turned her face so that Judith could not observe it. As I took a parting look at the beautiful belle ere leaving the room, I felt how hard it was to break from the spell of physical loveliness:—I thought if death should come and unrobe that splendid creature, the superb casket would be despoiled, and instead of the expected jewels, only flints of selfishness would be found with power to wound throughout eternity. Her dress was of pale blue satin, over which lightly waved illusion lace; a light gold chain glittered upon her neck, and her beautiful arms gleamed with jewels. A wreath of pale blue flowers was twined around her head; it swept back a portion of her abundant ringlets from her face. I felt thankful that we were not to meet Mr. Benzoni; we had learned through Frank Morton that he had lately gone to Italy.

"It was best for me to speak to her, was it not?" inquired Grace, as we descended the stairs. We wended our way through the hall and entered the conservatory, for Grace was still too much agitated to enter the parlors.

"Yes, I think it was," I returned. "We often meet in society, and it excites remark where persons are not courteous to each other; besides, she will not think how deeply

she has smitten you if you treat her with ordinary politeness."

"I thought of that," responded Grace; "and I also thought I ought to *forgive* her. I do not, I know I do not; sometimes when I am praying, a momentary softness penetrates my feelings for her; I realize that she is wandering from final peace; I almost pity her, but soon again the hardness returns to me, and flood after flood overwhelms me, until I despair of ever regarding her as a child of the Eternal—a soul as precious to the Most High as my own, or yours. I feel, Kate, that my great suffering will not depart until I learn to forgive. I can forgive *him;* all the wrong I involuntarily attribute to her. I did not think she would be here to-night: Miss Cardover does not admire her, I think."

"I should judge not. Perhaps Mr. Cardover desired her to be invited," I answered hastily. "Shall we go in the parlors now?" We went into the hall, and followed behind a party who were just entering the room. Judith was first. Mr. Cardover came forward to welcome her, his fine countenance beaming with an expression that awoke a forgotten pang within me. I felt as if a circle of light was around her radiant head, when his beautiful glance recognised her. I *saw* that he loved her. I leaned on Walter's arm; I felt it tremble, as he caught sight of Judith. Fortunately he seated me by a table filled with engravings. I listened to the hushed murmur of applause that greeted the belle, and knew how proud Mr. Cardover was of her. I had divined from his manner and look that he did not suspect the relation Mr. Benzoni bore to the bright coquette. We had not mentioned Mr. Benzoni's name to any one since the dissolution of Grace's engagement. Grace seated herself beside the aged pair of the household, Mr. and Mrs. Cardover who talked with her, and bestowed upon her the

fond glances with which the old repay the young who care for them.

I took up an engraving, and bent my eyes upon it; but my thoughts were not upon the picture. The powerful influence that had swept over me once before when I saw Mr. Cardover speak to Judith, again stirred within my soul; an irrepressible yearning arose; an anguished feeling; involuntarily I followed her with my eyes. She was conversing with two young men, who listened and flirted in very fashionable style. I saw her only as the realization of a vision of hope and joy to *one* being; she was the star of his existence, and his glances sought her often. Why should I care? Was it possible that I had mistaken the character of my friendship for him? Was it possible that I felt an undue interest in him? The proud blood rose to my brow at the thought, and with it sprung a self-disdainful resolve to rid my nature of such folly. I had ever looked with impatient scorn upon women who have no need of being won. I thanked Heaven that the feelings that had surprised me were but incipient fancies, easy to control, to cast under foot. A powerful pride arose within me; I exulted in it; I was glad to know that it would enable me to break my heart, should an hour of necessity come. As I mechanically turned over the engravings upon the table, a kind clear voice spoke to me. It was Mr. Waldron's. He sat beside me, and looked at the pictures, sometimes talking, and sometimes looking at the guests. His gaze riveted itself upon Judith, then his eyes sought Grace, and turned from one to the other, at last dwelling earnestly upon my cousin. I thought he would fain have read her thoughts, would fain have learned the moving springs of that young nature. She was quiet in all her movements; she did not wrong herself by affecting a gayety she did not feel; she rather sought to soothe the pain within, by low converse with those who were neither bril-

liant nor attractive. A slight flush was upon her cheeks; it enhanced her beauty, and gave her countenance a brightness that was not reflected from her heart. She shunned attention, while Judith eagerly sought it, yet it pleased me to see that Grace was admired. While we were looking at her, sets were forming for cotillions; she was led out to dance; at the same moment, Mr. Bedell came forward to fulfil an engagement with me. Afterwards he danced with Grace, and looked so very happy. Walter was on the floor perpetually, and awoke many a peal of joyous laughter by his gay sallies; to others his spirits did not seem forced.

Grace proposed leaving early, and I was heartily glad of it. When we went up in the dressing-room, I looked in the glass earnestly, first to see if I looked cheerful. I was convinced that the flash in my eyes and the glow on my cheeks could easily be mistaken for pleasure. Next I looked to see if I had any attractions; it had never occurred to me that I could be pretty, as I had never been used to flattery. I had overheard a stranger remarking favorably on my looks. Now I compared my face with the bright, young countenances below. I felt that it might pass among them without remark; perhaps to some it might seem fair. I felt grateful for this; I had feared my soul was set in a casket that could not please.

On the way home Mr. Bedell declared that he had never passed so delightful an evening.

"Delightful!" retorted Walter, with frightful energy. "I never saw such tameness and stupidity in a company in my life."

"Was it *so*, Kate?" propounded James gravely. Under the light of the moon I saw that his eyes twinkled with laughter at Walter's state of mind. How easy it is to be heartless when we are happy.

"It seemed to me," I answered, "like a very happy company."

"Grace, wasn't it dull?" demanded Walter. "Every body was artificial."

"I have enjoyed parties better," she returned. James seemed somewhat struck with surprise at this answer, and was meditative all the rest of the way home. He walked with Grace, and bent his ear to her lips whenever her gentle voice uttered a word.

We hurried to our chamber. Grace threw off her wreath of flowers with a kind of bitterness; then she unclasped the little gold bracelets from her shoulders, and held them in her hands a moment, looking at them through gathering tears. They took her back to her peaceful infancy. She hastily thrust them into her rosewood box of trinkets, and began unbraiding the rich hair I had taken so much pains with. She pushed it back as if any attempt at ornament were irksome to her. I was tired, and crept in bed a few moments after we entered the room. Grace sat down before the dressing-table and began to write.

"Oh, Grace," I exclaimed, "not to-night! it is late."

"Yes, I must," she responded. In the morning, when I was putting away some little ornaments in the rosewood box, I saw the paper Grace had been writing on the night previous.

"May I read it?" I asked, turning around and holding it up before her. She slowly shook her head, looking at me the while with her dear kind eyes.

"It may do me good," I pleaded.

She smiled sadly, and said, "Do as you wish, dear." She went down stairs, and I sat down to read her midnight thoughts. They ran as follows:—

"This whole weary evening I have waited for this moment, when I could be alone with God—when I could pour

out the anguish of my soul, and hope for a breath of rest. The sight of Judith awoke a consuming pain within me, and yet I moved about, conversed, and lived—it seemed as if existence could not long endure such pain. It seems so now; it seems so continually, save when a moment of relief comes. O my God! help me until I can say, 'Not my will, but thine be done.' I must bow to the chastener! I *will!* Not until this night have I gained even a momentary consent from my soul to suffer. I seemed to be lifted on high an instant, looking upon my life from eternity, and perceiving the necessity of this hour for the development of a harmonious, final *whole*. But when I thought I could repose on this hope, I fell back amid all my struggles. Shall I again on earth taste of peace? Shall I learn to feel with gratitude that there is much that is beautiful in the world? I think upon the absent one! How little I dreamed once that his gift to me would be a soul-world wakened into a wild agony and bitterness. If I had never seen him, this cruel tempest would never have aroused itself, threatening my life's foundations. I think of the words of Queen Esther with a sort of consolation: 'If I perish, I perish.' But I cannot forbear dwelling upon Giovanni with incessant, agonized yearning: at times only love and tenderness sweep over me; I could bear all, if I did not fear his steps were tending to eternal woe. If I could save him! if I could help him! Oh! the dreams of doing him good that must die! Lost! lost to me! I can never reach his averted heart. Often I could dash away every brightness, to sleep in eternal oblivion. I grow weary of the battle. Sometimes dear words of Holy Writ come to me, when I lean over the gulf of despair. My God! impress upon my unhappy heart the conviction that all trials which we cannot avert, are permitted for some use. They are of use to the innocent—how is it with the guilty? Oh Giovanni! if this

suffering could bless you, I would walk through the furnace were it seven times heated. But here is the anguish! here am I helpless! Every morning when I rise, I pray so earnestly for strength to endure the day; it seems as if I should give way, and sink into the arms of death. Sometimes I cannot weep tears that are a luxury and relief; the fountain is withered. Alas! it is a wicked joy to me to see that I grow thinner day by day—to see that my strength lessens. The agony of life has rolled upon me with an overwhelming weight, and I pray in my madness for death! Ay, more entreatingly than my young soul ever prayed to realize beautiful dreams of life. I dare not pray to *God* for death, but it is a thirsting thought within me. Resignation! Oh, God, give it me! Remove this anguish which strikes at the roots of my being; it plucks out life from every hope which sweetly charmed me for the future. Oh, to live thus! and yet for three weeks I have been in this living death. I learn each day how many charms were once comprised in my thoughts of life—of the world. I have often with impious pride thought I should have strength for any trials that might befall me; but I am so helpless, so agonized, so cowardly. I shrink with terror inexpressible from the dispensations of that Being who 'doeth all things well.' And yet in the very deepest depths of my soul, I feel that I need this suffering—that it must be. I strive to bear up before our beloved ones; to speak cheerfully while the arrow of death quivers at my heart-strings. Sometimes when I am alone, Josephine comes to me, and looks earnestly in my eyes; I lift her in my lap; she strokes my hair, and lays her cheek to mine. Then I am lulled to forgetfulness by her soothing caress. Mary talks to me from the experiences of her own heart; it blesses me. To lose happiness is an agony so sharp; if others move on with ease, why should not I? Why cannot I keep my soul quiet? I feel so unsatisfied with the

manner in which I have borne this trial. Heavenly Father! show me the morning light before I faint under the darkness! Stretch forth thy right hand and thy holy arm, and give me the victory! Thou canst not permit thy children to suffer a very long time such death pangs! Thou sendest also sunshine to cast a glory over the pilgrimage we take. Oh, take care of thy miserable child!"

I had read through fast falling tears this record of the profound passion and agony of Grace's soul. I almost wondered and trembled to comprehend the capacity of suffering in our natures. I had not dreamed that Grace had suffered *so much*, when she kept on her quiet way, as if nothing had happened. Cowardly she called herself, and yet through her fearful baptism of woe her heroic lips had been sealed; she entreated no sympathy, she uttered no complaint, but when encouraging words were spoken to her, she listened with a hungry, devouring look in her large eyes, as if she had great need of strength. The manuscript did me good; it made me thank God fervently that the depths of my soul were yet unmoved. The feelings that had briefly been awakened within me, seemed very light and superficial. I blushed to remember them, and blushed more deeply still to recall the tears I had once shed. In my folly I had momentarily imagined myself within the temple of Cupid, when I had only been hovering around the door, looking in, and crying because I could not go in. I laid the paper in the box, and began washing away traces of my tears, with the expression, "Oh, Kate Hamilton, it is astonishing what a little idiot you can manage to be. I think it's time you went in search of a little common sense. Will you not, and quit your foolishness?"

CHAPTER XI

The breath of spring came and touched Cousin John with its healing wand; he had recovered from his rheumatism, but ill health had not yet entirely released him; he sat by the fire as moody as ever; we almost feared he would become a hypochondriac, or we should have feared it, if his crossness had not been a signal of some kind of vitality. It was hard for him to bring down his stately head to a clerkship, and yet we seemed to be drawing daily nearer the yawning gulf of poverty. Cousin Mary was a gem of a manager; but there were many little calls for debts, and the money often went by mutual consent that way, if there was any in the house. Sometimes I thought Cousin Mary feared her husband would never regain his active business habits. I imagined she never spoke to him on the subject. He was apt to think we were not deeply penetrated with affliction on account of his aches and pains. He never really said so, but the truth gleamed on us, nevertheless. If he had ever thanked us we should have been all sympathy. The poor wife's active step had grown feeble in his service; her eyes began to look hollow; she was weary and worn with physical labor.

Grace sat at her painting. For the first time in many

weeks her sweet voice warbled forth a song; a low, sad thing it was, but it was blessed music to those who loved her. Cousin Mary glanced at me furtively; her eyes shone with gratification.

"Stop your singing over there, will you?" broke in Mr. Rodman. "I should like to take my nap some time this afternoon. You three contrive to talk incessantly, when the children are not here to make a noise."

Cousin Mary's usually calm eyes flashed fire. "If you wish to take a nap, the bedroom is the proper place," she exclaimed. "We should sometimes like to have freedom of speech in this room."

Cousin John turned slowly around, and gazed at his wife, as if overpowered with astonishment; he expected to see her eyes droop with sudden gentleness after her boldness. He had pressed her too far of late. She looked straight at him, and all the hoarded defiance of years was in her steady eyes; her lip was curved with a haughty scorn; she had burst her bonds, and all the deep passions of her nature were aroused. For years she had striven to be a devoted wife; she had regarded it as her life-work to aid in raising up the image of God in her husband's soul. The manner in which he had met the chastisements of Heaven, had slowly driven hope from her heart. The sun which had shone upon her path had set; her great hope had gone down. Of late she had frequently acted according to her own judgment, and had met the reproaches of her husband with a firm, complete coldness and silence; then again, she would seem to return to her former manner, to her former hope. Mr. Rodman did not reply to his wife; he threw his handkerchief over his face, and leaned his head back in his arm-chair. She said no more; she resumed her sewing, but a fiery spot had gathered in each cheek; her deeply red lips were compressed together, with a look of determination at once powerful and

quiet. Grace and I felt that we should not have witnessed the scene; we felt very uncomfortable; we rose simultaneously to leave the room. Cousin Mary rose also, and went to the kitchen to prepare supper. At the tea-table all was calm and quiet as usual. Walter and James looked inquiringly at Cousin Mary, doubtless wondering at the fire in her eye, and the unusual flush upon her cheeks. Grace and I washed the tea things, and Mrs. Rodman went to the nursery alone.

Ma's writing a letter!" said Josephine, dancing around the room; she stopped in the midst of her pirouetting, half expecting a rebuke from her father, but he was silent and gloomy. In her solitude cousin Mary wrote thus:

Dear John,—I think you have never understood me. I write because I can say every thought that has been slumbering in my heart for years;—I write, because your cold look will not stifle me, as it often has done, when I would have uttered things I wished to speak;—I write, because you will read it, and not cast it aside with a "pshaw!" as you do always my soul's deepest spoken thoughts. The time has come for us to know each other; my long suffering is past. My love for you is extinguished; has been extinguished for years, and yet you have been my tormentor for sixteen long years. My woe commenced almost as soon as the marriage vows were pronounced; and yet I loved you with all the strength of my nature, or rather I thought I did. You were all the world to me. And you said you loved me: probably you did. But with a love I despise; it has all the characteristics of hatred towards me. Oh! forgive this hard and cutting speech; it has been in my heart many times, but never on my tongue. I am tired of simulation now; I must pour out all the truth. John! do you remember the first year we were married? how you petted

me when you were good-natured, and struck me with cold, harsh words when any thing changed your mood? Did you never see how hard it was for me to keep down the bitter answers that sprung to my lips? Did you take my quietness for want of feeling? did you think me amiable, when the wild tempest of retaliation was heaving my heart? or did you never think at all of me in my misery, lying on the floor weeping after you had gone? Did you never dream that your selfishness could alienate me? have you to this hour, dreamed that within my breast no world existed? no world filled with thoughts, hopes, fears, emotions? Have you thought my spirit blank, whereon no writing might be stamped? You have not ceased to sow your seed, from that first year,—from that time until now, have I remained bound, seldom answering back. I feared bitter, open quarrels; I feared to destroy the little vestige of peace within our home. I feared to let our children witness the strong passions sleeping in their mother's heart. I feared myself; I trembled lest I should become a scolding virago. Instead, I have become a reserved, self-controlled woman,—I have set foot upon the little frankness God gave me. Yet I have wrestled for a forgiving spirit,—I have prayed long hours for strength to pluck the virtue from my trial. I do not regret our marriage; my stubborn nature was one which must tread over burning ploughshares, ere it could be conquered, ere it could become unselfish. I do not, when I look over my life, as God must view it, regret that I have not had as many joys as others have had. I do in truth, owe you thanks. You drove me to God. Past hours come before me; I can recall the time when I dared no longer sit upon your knee; I dared not hasten to you with a kiss when you came home; I dared not pass my hand through your hair, or even rest my arm upon your shoulder. An instinctive feeling taught me that you would throw me off, and that my heart would

break, to be repelled. How often at twilight have I sat near you, and wanted to sit upon your knee, and tell you all my thoughts, and listen to yours. "Oh, love me! I *must* be loved," was the cry of my heart. But I dared not speak it, lest you should think me a very tedious wife, and wish I had not such thoughts and feelings. Then have I said to myself, "Oh, heart! always thus must you kneel and pray for a little love?"

Alas! the days when I met a caressing smile from you, went into the eternal past. I scarcely know how it came about. I know in those early days I was less calm, less patient than I am now; but after I had learned to implore God's help in my necessity, the alienation went on; you did not heed my efforts to mould myself to your wishes. And then I wept because my youthful looks were fading, and because you sometimes spoke of it. You did not love *me*, you did not look for the heart; you placed an immense value upon physical bloom, while bloom of soul was considered of little worth. I knew that the morning of my youth had departed; that materialists and sensualists would see no sweetness or freshness in me; but oh, when I married, I said to myself, "Here is one friend who will be faithful unto death, who will love me when other friends fall away; who will clasp me closer to his heart when the passing years shall have proven that I am worthy of his affection." I found that I must be gauged by this perishing body, instead of my immortal soul. Is it strange that I cried to the years, "Stay back! take not from me the little youth I have. Oh, condemn me not to lose every charm in my husband's eyes!" Love! celestial in thine origin, thou clingest to the celestial spirits—thou takest little heed of material changes. I knew an adored wife—she was older than myself—often I looked at her and thought, "I am not more vain than you, and yet you cannot dread growing old as I do, because you are blessed and en-

chanting in your husband's eyes. You live in the young world of love, while I, alas! am shut out." She never knew what it was to be valued most for bodily merits. You tried hard to win me, for I was shy and fled from you. I did not know how to act towards you. But I have often asked myself, "Was it love that led him to seek me? Did he ever feel all the warmth, the glow, the sweetness of genuine love when he wrote to me loving words, and whispered them in my ear?" Then I would go to your old letters and read them, to convince myself that I had not been too carelessly won; and there I read that I was more beautiful in your eyes than any other woman, more dear and precious; there you promised to watch over my happiness always, to guard me from all the storms of life—your own breast should be bared to shield your little flower. Now there seems a most bitter irony in those words. Since our marriage, my own heart has been bared to receive your strokes, yours alone—the world has had no storms to terrify me. If, when I stood at the altar, robed in white, with the orange flowers upon my head, the curtain had been lifted, how I should have despaired. Oh, misery! to have seen that you would love me less instead of more. I remember the evening after our marriage; I sat at your feet and rested my head against your knee; holy thoughts stole over me. You laid your hand, oh, so lightly, so tenderly upon my brow, and whispered, "What is my darling thinking of? She must tell me all her thoughts now." And tears of a strange gladness dropped from my eyes—I thought I saw a picture of our blessed life together. I told you all my dreamings, my aspirations, and you listened. All was calm without; we sat on the old front porch at home; the quiet night air passed over my face, the lightning played in the sky, and one or two stars came out and shone through the darkness. Dear John! I must believe that you loved me then. But it is gone. I cannot help

it—I strove to detain it. I know that you do not feel the same now, and I would not force your affection. I wish there might be friendship between us. I wish, for my happiness' sake, you would keep back cold irritable words. Have mercy upon me. I cannot get used to them. I cannot shield myself from a fresh pang every time you speak to me so. Ah, think what a different life ours might have been, if you had early taught yourself to guard your lips, to care for the feelings of those around you. Our darling children fear you. I would not give you pain, but I sat down to write the truth, and I will say it all. Many a time have they hastened from your presence, saying to each other, "Quick! there comes father!" One morning I found Josephine with her apron to her eyes, crying passionately. I asked her what the matter was; she said her Sunday School teacher said that "little girls who did not love their parents never could go to Heaven." And she buried her face in her apron again, sobbing in her childish despair.

"But you love your parents, don't you, Josephine?" I asked.

"I don't love father. I can't, I can't. I do sometimes, when he is good to me, but I hate him almost every day. Oh, mother, must I go to the bad place?"

It is a terrible thing to make such an impress upon an innocent soul. For God's sake! do not waken in our children's hearts the volcano of fierce passions that you awoke in mine. I have said that you have not understood me; you have judged me by the calm severe exterior I have unhappily acquired. Not always am I thus calm, thus staid even in my exterior; my heart gushes forth at intervals when I pray with my children; pray to Almighty God that I may so train them that they may be prepared better than I was to meet the hard realities of life. You think me cold and impassive:

"The stream that seems to thee so still
Hath such a tide below."

John, my husband, for the last time let me plead with you, not for my sake, but for your own. I can bear a few more sad years, and I see glorious visions beyond the gate of the grave. But have you reflected upon your coming destiny? At the risk of your bitterest hate, I must beg you to think—to realize that you are a hypocrite, and that your doom will be that of the hypocrite, unless you spend the years left you in undoing the past, in retracing old steps, and beginning all anew. Do you remember that you profess to be a disciple of the Saviour? Do you remember that you go to the holy table, and partake of consecrated bread with an unconsecrated heart? Do you remember that your lips utter, "Therefore, with angels and archangels, and all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory," when the "Holy" is a stranger to your soul? Do you realize that you are one of the unworthy?—a Pharisee, who will be cast into outer darkness when the door of the eternal world shall open? Not with self-righteousness do I speak, but with warm beseeching prayers. Oh, forgive me all the feelings I have showed you. You can never know how often the dove of humility drove them away. Let me be a sister to you, a friend, the mother of your children. I will never ask for a fondness you cannot give, but let me be your soul's truest friend. I commenced this letter, feeling utterly, eternally driven from you; but my better angel has returned. Be all that you may be, true and good; and I will dedicate myself to you as I never did before, without reserve, without measure. I have striven for your comfort from a sense of duty Once, hope was with me; I trusted that after patient years you might gain a gentler spirit; but slowly and surely you

have gone on a downward path; you have fallen into no vices outwardly, but the tenor of your inward being is changed—it has grown fatally worse. O, think of what you are capable! think of the strength God gives to the earnest spirit. You might be one whom I could admire and reverence. Give me hope once more! Change our home into a paradise. We could all sooner lose material comforts than the sunshine from an honest spirit. Be one of us!—one whom we may all trust and love, and a tide of warm devotion will set towards you. The years of earthly life that yet remain may be tinged with a more golden hue than past ones. Cast not this prayer away! It appeals to all that is best within you. Shut not out the angel that stoops to fan the dying embers of conscience. Shut not out the God who uses human instrumentality to awaken you from your death-slumber. Listen! he calls! "Come unto me ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Devotedly,

MARY.

Cousin Mary was in her bedroom; Grace and Gertrude in the kitchen; Mr. Rodman sat in his accustomed corner reading his newspaper. Over a favorite picture I worked *con amore*, meditating upon the many hours of pleasure my business afforded me, and wishing all toilers could thus gratify their tastes in their daily labors, thus drain sweet innocent thoughts from an occupation that gave them bread; thus cheerily send up thanks to God, for having implanted within the soul of man a warm love of producing the beautiful. Josephine came from her mother's room with a letter in her hand.

"This is for you, father," she said, laying it upon his knee, and passing out of the room.

"Very well," he answered, without glancing from his pa-

"The stream that seems to thee so still
Hath such a tide below."

John, my husband, for the last time let me plead with you, not for my sake, but for your own. I can bear a few more sad years, and I see glorious visions beyond the gate of the grave. But have you reflected upon your coming destiny? At the risk of your bitterest hate, I must beg you to think—to realize that you are a hypocrite, and that your doom will be that of the hypocrite, unless you spend the years left you in undoing the past, in retracing old steps, and beginning all anew. Do you remember that you profess to be a disciple of the Saviour? Do you remember that you go to the holy table, and partake of consecrated bread with an unconsecrated heart? Do you remember that your lips utter, "Therefore, with angels and archangels, and all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory," when the "Holy" is a stranger to your soul? Do you realize that you are one of the unworthy?—a Pharisee, who will be cast into outer darkness when the door of the eternal world shall open? Not with self-righteousness do I speak, but with warm beseeching prayers. Oh, forgive me all the feelings I have showed you. You can never know how often the dove of humility drove them away. Let me be a sister to you, a friend, the mother of your children. I will never ask for a fondness you cannot give, but let me be your soul's truest friend. I commenced this letter, feeling utterly, eternally driven from you; but my better angel has returned. Be all that you may be, true and good; and I will dedicate myself to you as I never did before, without reserve, without measure. I have striven for your comfort from a sense of duty Once, hope was with me; I trusted that after patient years you might gain a gentler spirit; but slowly and surely you

have gone on a downward path; you have fallen into no vices outwardly, but the tenor of your inward being is changed—it has grown fatally worse. O, think of what you are capable! think of the strength God gives to the earnest spirit. You might be one whom I could admire and reverence. Give me hope once more! Change our home into a paradise. We could all sooner lose material comforts than the sunshine from an honest spirit. Be one of us!—one whom we may all trust and love, and a tide of warm devotion will set towards you. The years of earthly life that yet remain may be tinged with a more golden hue than past ones. Cast not this prayer away! It appeals to all that is best within you. Shut not out the angel that stoops to fan the dying embers of conscience. Shut not out the God who uses human instrumentality to awaken you from your death-slumber. Listen! he calls! "Come unto me ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Devotedly,

MARY.

Cousin Mary was in her bedroom; Grace and Gertrude in the kitchen; Mr. Rodman sat in his accustomed corner reading his newspaper. Over a favorite picture I worked *con amore*, meditating upon the many hours of pleasure my business afforded me, and wishing all toilers could thus gratify their tastes in their daily labors, thus drain sweet innocent thoughts from an occupation that gave them bread; thus cheerily send up thanks to God, for having implanted within the soul of man a warm love of producing the beautiful. Josephine came from her mother's room with a letter in her hand.

"This is for you, father," she said, laying it upon his knee, and passing out of the room.

"Very well," he answered, without glancing from his pa-

per. He read on during a quarter of an hour, then took up the large letter, saying, "For me? What's this?"

He broke the seal and commenced reading; a hot flush passed over his brow, an angry expression settled on his lips; it deepened into rage as he proceeded, and a glare of vengeance shot from his eyes. With almost suspended breath he read through two or three sheets; the red flush died away, and a paleness overspread his whole face, even to his lips; a new look of anguish wreathed itself about his mouth. Unloved! Deserted! Where is the heart not wholly lost that can bear this? Even God thundered in his soul, "Thou hypocrite!" A hated father! a despised husband! an unsought friend! The shaft had struck home; the curse of Cain smote him; he saw that he had killed his brother Abel, and a "fugitive upon the face of the earth" was branded on his shrinking heart. He took his hat and went into the street. Cousin Mary immediately came from her room, with a miserable look of anxiety upon her pale face; a sort of devouring regret was in her eyes, as she watched her husband from the window. Had she struck apart the last link that bound him to her? Had she supplanted indifference with mad hate? At noon he came home; there was no trace of agitation upon his features; his iron will kept back the agony. At the dinner-table he was scrupulously polite to all of us. "Shall I have the honor of helping you, madam?" he asked with bitter sarcasm, looking at his wife.

"If you please," she answered calmly as usual. I sat next her; her low, quick breathing, indicated interior anguish. This fevered, steady breathing is terrible; it is as if the heart were telling out its most fearful strokes. Husband and wife strove to eat; Cousin Mary could not. She rose and went to her room; the "boys" left soon after, and the children cleared the table with quiet motions. Mr. Rodman pushed back his chair, and followed with his eyes their every

step; he looked into their faces with an eager, wistful, most painful expression. They observed it, and hastened their work; hastened with their dishes to the kitchen. When the door closed, Josephine's voice exclaimed,

"See what a lot of dishes I brought at once," and both of them broke into merry laughter, as if just entered within the domain of freedom. Their cheerful chatting rose from below, often interrupted with shouts of mirth; the two children have the richest, sweetest laugh that ever broke from rosy lips. They came back together, and with a staid, grave manner removed the table-cloth; they were about setting the table in its place, when their father rose and did it for them. With a glad "Come!" they started for the nursery;—the weather was mild enough for them to occupy their old quarters. With a sigh Mr. Rodman went away again. At tea, he treated his wife with the same sarcastic politeness as at dinner.

"My head aches as if it would burst," Cousin Mary said, in the evening, in a stifled tone, as she laid down her sewing. "I fear I am going to be ill. I must have a doctor. More expenses!"

"What are expenses compared with your health?" asked Grace, springing to her side and laying her cool hand upon her hot forehead. "Oh, Mary, you have been killing yourself lately; you have not been used to such hard work, and to such broken sleep as you have had this winter."

Mr. Rodman left instantly for a physician, and we placed our dear one in bed, looking with sudden fear into her brilliant eyes, upon her glowing cheeks. The doctor pronounced her in a dangerous condition; a violent fever had set in; we watched her all night, and Mr. Rodman took no rest; he walked the dining-room with heavy, hasty steps, until Grace besought him not to disturb his wife thus. "I was not thinking," he answered, and kept his watch henceforth very quiet-

ly. Every few moments he came to the door, and inquired how she was; he glanced at her, but did not go near her. In the morning he was haggard and pale. Cousin Mary was a little better; we left her to attend family prayers. Mr. Rodman did not read with his usual strong, ringing voice; when he prayed, his pride was overcome, his voice trembled; he paused, brushed away fast falling tears, and commenced again. He stopped and rose from his knees; "we lifted up our voices and wept," ere we also rose. He went in to see his wife; he spoke kindly to her; he did not kiss her, utter caressing words, or lay his hand upon her brow or cheek. She did not seem to heed him; after she had fallen asleep he went out; we hoped he had gone in pursuit of business. Our painting was laid aside, for we needed sleep after our night watching.

Three days after the doctor said, "Will you tell Mr. Rodman, Miss Hamilton, that his wife cannot recover? She may live a day or two!" He spoke in a low voice, "Tell him directly!"

I sought Cousin John; he was pacing the nursery; he had just left the sick chamber; he had seen the angel of death hovering over his wife's pillow.

"What?" he asked quickly, as I entered the nursery with traces of violent weeping upon my face.

"What?" he repeated, ere I could speak.

"She will not live long!"

"Does she know any thing?—any one?"

"No!"

"How long?" He could not finish the sentence.

"A day or two!" He sunk upon a chair and smote his forehead. "It is a just judgment. She was my only friend.' I left him with his head bowed upon his bosom. I was to watch that night, and Grace made me lie down to rest. I entered the spare room; it was dark and quiet there, and

I should be undisturbed. Cousin John went down stairs; after a little while I heard him return to the nursery. Broken sobs burst upon my ear, and a prayer followed. "My God! at last—at last, thou hast broken my stony heart—*at last*, when my atonement comes too late. The vials of thy wrath are poured upon my head; just thou art, but is thine ear closed to mercy? May she not live! live but one year, that I may expiate the dreadful past; that I may heal her broken heart with kindness, such kindness as never man showered upon woman,—such kindness as remorse and repentance create. These dreadful days! are they our last together? Must she go to her grave with my cruel words yet in her ear? Must she never know that in my soul's deepest recesses there is a repentance that is redeeming? Must she never know that her true words struck home? Must she still dream that I cannot forgive,—that I cannot hear the truth that shows me myself?—that I visit her with cold sarcasm because she prayed me to avoid eternal ruin? Not in vain, my God, didst thou give to my childhood an angel mother! deeply imbedded in selfishness, her holy teachings have been preserved; they sprung to life when this last arrow pierced me. And must my children be motherless?—must their feet tread this tempting world without *her* for their guide? And now that I rise, and with staggering steps return to my Father's house, must I have no faithful one at my side to cheer and strengthen? With broken fortunes and weakened health, must I go down to my grave alone?—must I never meet with the devotion she promised? O God! thou *canst* not take her now, when her extinguished love has burst upon me so terribly!—not now, when I have just learned that no one cares for me upon the face of the earth!—not now, when I am stripped of every hope. Alas, my strength is weakness! This stubborn heart is athirst for the love it slighted!—athirst for the childish

love it dreamed that it possessed! While, in my inmost heart, I honored and reverenced her as the purest and best among women, I was turning her from me by my strange, blind selfishness. Almighty God, send down thy token! Let the dread destroyer pass by. 'Spare me a little that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and am no more seen!'"

His step passed down stairs again. I fell asleep, and did not waken until evening, All the family were gathered in the bedroom; the doctor was there also. The children were weeping, or rather Josephine wept. Gertrude watched her mother with an intense gaze; "the fountain of the great deep" had been broken up within her; she had all the depth of feeling that characterized Cousin Mary; if she had one passion stronger than all others, it was love for her mother. She admired her character; there was the likeness of sympathy between them. If Cousin Mary moved, or uttered a sound, Gertrude's eager look turned to the doctor, to see if there were any hope; and when she saw no change in his quiet face, she pressed her quivering lips together, and turned her gaze of unutterable love upon that pale face again. She had grown so dear to us in this trial; she was so small we had all looked upon her as a mere child, but she had suddenly become mature in feeling and action. She inherited her father's irritability; she was somewhat indolent by nature, but it had vanished as if by magic; her light feet hurried from morning until night, and no hasty expression from her broke the spell of tenderness dissolved over the household. Dear Grace! it was balm to her own tried heart, to exhaust herself in kindly devices for the invalid. She tried to take Cousin Mary's place in the family; she did not seem to know what fatigue was. She wept almost incessantly when Cousin Mary was first taken ill, and we apprehended this result; but she was perfectly calm now, and a holy serenity pervaded her countenance.

CHAPTER XII.

The doctor left us to go to a patient, whose life he hoped to save. We sent the children to bed, with the promise of calling them should there be any change in their mother. Grace took a pillow, and threw herself on the settee in the dining-room. Mr. Rodman and I remained alone in the sick chamber; I sat near Cousin Mary's pillow, and her husband sat at the foot of the bed, leaning his forehead on the footboard. For a long time she was quiet, and apparently unconscious; then she looked at us alternately; her mind wandered as she spoke. "He said, 'Shall I have the honor of helping you, Madam?'" Her voice was low and childlike.

"Didn't he say that?" and she looked earnestly at me. "Yes! I thought I should die then; I knew that he hated me then; I knew I was ruined."

"Hush, dear! you must keep very quiet!"

"No! I can't keep quiet! Who are you? Oh! you're Kate! Then I wished I was dead; I wished I had never written that letter; I wished so, as soon as Josephine had given it to him, but I couldn't get it back! it was meant that I should make him hate me, I suppose. Oh, well! I don't care so much now! I'm happy enough now. Who is that sitting there?"

"Here, child, drink this water, and then you must not

speak any more!" I said, raising her head from the pillow: she gazed up into my eyes with a look entirely docile and childlike. "Must I drink this?"

"Yes!" She did so, and sunk upon her pillow quietly; she did not speak for a long time.

"Where's the Empress Josephine?"

"She has gone to bed."

"My heart aches so for her; you know Napoleon often spoke harshly to her. Do you remember one time, when they had been parted, she met him at some city—I don't remember what city—he treated her rudely; he did not even embrace her. I know how she felt then. Oh, I am so warm! Fan me! She didn't care for honors and kingdoms, did she? she was like me; she cared for love. She was better than I was, though; *she* was patient to the end. I awoke hard feelings in my husband's heart,—in John's heart! Isn't he my husband? Is he your husband?"

"Mary," I answered, looking down in her appealing eyes, "the doctor would not allow you to talk so much!"

"Wouldn't he? Give me a drink, and perhaps I can keep still!"

She remained quiet, with her eyes fixed upon her husband, until she fell asleep; he had not changed his position, or made any sound. She was better at daybreak; the doctor came, and looked pleased. He said she would come back from the grave.

Her convalescence was slow and tedious. At length, when a glorious May morning broke over the earth, the doctor said we might wheel her arm-chair into the parlor, and have her once more in our midst. He, however, advised us not to move her until afternoon, that the fatigue might insure a good night's rest. The children hastened to their flower-beds, and began to pluck all the loveliest flowers to enliven the parlor.

"We'll make it look perfectly beautiful!" exclaimed Gertrude, beckoning to Walter and me. We went out on the back piazza, and seated ourselves to make bouquets and wreaths for the children's heads. Walter had more taste in arranging flowers than many ladies. The day before, James had been botanising in the country; he brought home various treasures for the children, a quantity of beautiful moss among other things. This moss Gertrude brought from the nursery and laid in my lap, with an entreating request that I would make vases, and a basket to hold flowers. So we went busily to work; between our chatting, I read occasionally from the paper upon which the moss lay. Upon looking over the arrivals, I read Mr. Benzoni's name. This I kept to myself, knowing that it would bring a cloud to Walter's brow, should he know it. He seemed quiet, kind, and cheerful.

"Tell me about the sister Josephine resembles," I said. "Is she pretty?"

"I think so," he replied, proudly; "she is more than pretty; she is very beautiful!"

"She probably looks like you," I said, laughing.

"No!" she is very unlike me in appearance. I hope you may see her some time; she is only a half sister, but she could not be dearer to me than she is."

"Where is she now?"

"She is teaching at the South. She has golden hair, Kate, a rose and lily complexion, and the sweetest eyes and mouth in the world."

"Is she lovely in character?" I questioned.

"She is," he answered with a smile. "Let me tell you a little incident about her, and you will believe it. Once when we were children we were caught out in the woods in a thunder shower; the wind blew furiously, and uprooted a tree near which we stood; a branch struck us, and threw us

both down; it gave me a blow upon the head that rendered me senseless. When I recovered, Effie, white as ashes, was leaning over me, trying to make me drink from a leaf which she had twisted into a drinking vessel, and filled with water. She went backward and forward from a brook near, to bring me water a number of times. I noticed at length that she carried the leafy cup in her left hand; her trembling step and pallid lips frightened me.

"'What's the matter, Effie?' I asked, looking at the hand which hung motionless at her side.

"'I think my right arm is broken!' she answered, tears gushing into her eyes for the first time. Brave little Effie! She had not heeded herself while I seemed suffering. Her arm was in reality broken."

"She was a noble little creature!" I said, looking into Walter's fine face, grown bright with generous feeling. I little dreamed under what circumstances it would be my fate to meet this beautiful Effie, this beloved sister of Walter's.

Afternoon came; ere we drew Cousin Mary into the parlor, we all went to take an admiring look at it; the golden sunshine played between the half-closed blinds, and fell upon the flowers gracing the window-sills; two moss baskets, fresh and green, were filled with sparkling minerals and shells; one was made of wood moss, and its pretty mosaic seemed just fitted for its glittering freight. On the mantelpiece two moss vases held the pet flowers of May: in the centre of the shelf stood a small temple of the same material, its slender white columns contrasting with its greenness. Grace and I had hung up several of our latest pictures; they were without frames, but they would be new to the dear invalid. There was a crab-apple tree in the yard; its delicious blossoms scented the room with fragrance.

We drew Cousin Mary into the parlor; the children

kissed her with joyous abandon, and bade her look and admire. A broad gleam of light fell upon the flowery wreath and ringlets of Josephine, who dropped down at her mother's side, raising her eyes of heavenly tenderness to the beloved being for whom she had labored all day: like white wings, her arms folded themselves upon her mother's knee.

"My darlings look so kind I can scarcely look further!" said the happy mother, gazing upon the children, while grateful tears gathered in her dark eyes. She admired every thing we had done; the serene content that settled upon her countenance amply repaid us for our efforts.

"We can never be poor, while we have such heart wealth around us!" she said, glancing at Grace and me with a tremulous smile. "Every thing bright seems suddenly to cluster around me,—love makes my home beautiful, at an hour I had looked forward to with anxiety. How true it is that 'evils that never happened have chiefly made us wretched.'"

We settled ourselves down to our sewing. It seemed so blessed to know that the clouds had been removed from Cousin Mary's life. Mr. Rodman had become "one of us." His stubborn nature had grown strong in self-control; he always spoke to the children with infinite tenderness, as if he would woo their love; when he addressed his wife, his voice often took the low, indulgent tone so dear to a woman's heart. Often in her manner now, a sort of youthful sweetness and playfulness might be seen. It was altogether new to me, to see how winning and artless a warm nature could become under the heaven of affectionate eyes.

"I hardly want to get entirely well, you all make such a queen of me!" Cousin Mary said, laughing. As she spoke, Mr. Rodman came in from his business: he had obtained a clerkship. He looked at her with a smile that was half repressed in its pleased admiration.

"You look more like a bride than an invalid, Mary!" he said, glancing at her white wrapper, and little tasteful cap trimmed with pale pink ribbons. The latter was a present from Miss Cardover. "I thought I must help the family to spoil you!" he continued, handing her a volume of poems by a favorite author. She looked up at her husband, and she was beautiful; her smile of marvellous sweetness flashed an illumination over her face; a faint rose hue tinted her cheeks. She was radiant with love, and life, and hope.

"Thank you, John!" she said simply, and bent over the pages of the book. Mr. Rodman cast side glances at her. The feelings of his youth fell upon his heart like fresh spring blossoms, with his new aspirations after truth and goodness.

When Walter and James came in to tea, the latter looked upon the smiling countenance of Grace with a joyous cheerfulness; a sunny atmosphere bathed the whole household.

When the evening meal was over, Grace went into the parlor, to gather up our sewing, and put the room in order. James followed her, but I had not observed it. I entered the room quietly: he stood at her side, with one of her hands in his; she was looking down, with an expression of great pain on her countenance, and his low voice was uttering,

"Oh, Grace, you *cannot* say it!"

I stole softly from the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

JUDITH MORTON sat alone! A sunset glory was lingering in the western sky; she sat watching it, evidently expecting some one; at length she lost herself in happy dreamings. She was startled from her musings by a quick, eager step on the pavement. It was not the step she was looking for, and as it fell upon her ear, she could not keep down the wild throbbings of her passionate heart. She hastened to the door; she stood still, fearing disappointment, rallying back her self-command. She did not wish that the being best loved on earth, should learn the depths of *her* love, but she strove in vain for composure. The parlor door was thrown open without knocking, and Mr. Benzoni stood before her: she had not heard of his arrival in the city. A rapturous smile was upon his face; he had seen her from the street. She threw herself in his arms with weeping wild and joyful: she only looked up in his eyes, as he murmured,

"Adored!—angel!—my life!" and between each word his kisses were showered.

"When did you come?" she whispered.

"When shall you be all my own?" he replied, smiling down the love and happiness that overflowed his heart. She did not answer. He continued, "It is heaven to be with

you after this long absence!—heaven to look within your beautiful eyes!—heaven to know that your heart is all my own! I never dreamed the earth held so sweet an angel, and that she would give herself to me, and make me blest for ever. I never dreamed there could be a happiness so ecstatic; I am not capable of more, for my heart's deepest recesses tremble with this joy. Judith, do you love me even better than when we parted?"

She smiled her response, and disengaged herself from his arms, that they might seat themselves on the sofa. "But tell me, Judith, with words, that you love me better?"

"I do," she answered with downcast eyes; then she raised them suddenly, and their liquid sweetness told all the story: the bewitching smiles that dimpled her face could not be repressed. "It is my duty to love you more, if we are to be married soon," she said, her coquettish manner returning to her, "and I always fulfil my duties."

The word duty, called Grace to Mr. Benzoni's memory. "Your neighbors are well, I suppose?" he asked.

"Quite well," returned Judith. Her lover did not see the sudden cloud that overspread her face; the hard look that came about her mouth, and disappeared. A mighty pang shot through her heart for a moment, a pang of jealousy; she feared for the love she had stolen from another,—feared for the permanence of this idolatry. In her guileful heart, there dwelt not the strong faith in others that springs from innocence. But the pang went by.

"I have bought an ancient beautiful villa for us to live in," said Mr. Benzoni; "I have filled it with luxuries suited to my princess. I only care for the wealth I amassed in this country, that I may lay at your feet every thing you can desire."

"Shall we always live in Italy?"

"Not after you get tired of it. A wish of yours will

be like a pulse of my heart, not to be resisted, because I cannot say nay. And you cannot say nay to me in any thing, can you, my bird?"

"No, oh, no!" Judith spoke fervently. It is easy to be grateful to those we love, and a boundless love for each other welled up from their hearts. They could have sacrificed all exterior comforts for each other; they could have suffered, they could even have braved death for each other, but they could also have trodden bleeding human hearts into the dust for each other—they could have turned from a parent's tears and prayers; they could have cried to all the world, "Suffer, if so it must be, but let *us* be happy." Ah! that love should ever be so fiendish, so lost to heavenly promptings in its descent to earth. The love that is everlasting lends an ear to more than the chosen one, for it springs from the bosom of God, and a godlike spirit is ready to sacrifice its bliss at the cry of anguish or duty. It can bide its time, and wait the will of Him whose name is Love.

A carriage drove up to Mr. Morton's. Judith's ear caught the sound, and the crimson rose to her brow. She had momentarily forgotten an engagement with Mr. Cardover. She hesitated, then started from Mr. Benzoni's side. But eager footsteps again hastened to her; the door was thrown open, and Mr. Cardover seized her hand; he raised it with mock gallantry to his lips, and then looked on her with a brilliant, joyful smile. "Are you ready to ride?" he asked, not perceiving Mr. Benzoni, who sat somewhat concealed by the door.

"I cannot go! Excuse me!" she faltered, and then recovering herself with a stately air, she bowed, "Good evening! I am engaged for the evening!"

"What does this mean?" demanded Mr. Cardover bluntly, stung by her manner, and bewildered by surprise at this change. His self-possession returned in a moment. He

bowed a polite "Good evening!" and left her. He left her with the brightest dream that had ever come to lodge in his heart, all darkened—the brightest hopes that had ever sang in its silent chambers, all hushed. The black wing of disappointment drooped over him heavily, and shut out all light.

"How is this, Judith?" asked Mr. Benzoni, and his brow was so dark that her heart failed her; a strange fear of him grasped it, and she could not speak. Suspicion was a powerful element in Mr. Benzoni's character.

"How is this, Judith?" he repeated, a fierce jealousy flashing from his eyes. "It seems I came a few days earlier than you expected me. It seems you favor other lovers in my absence!"

"No! no!" she answered. "He is only a friend,—I was going to his sister's to spend the evening; she sent him for me." The lie came with difficulty from her lips.

"You are not telling me the truth!" said Mr. Benzoni from between his set teeth. A blackness seemed to settle over the girl's heart, as if the light of joy were going out for ever. Her blood was chilled, her face turned pale as death. This only confirmed the Italian in his suspicions.

"Have you permitted that man's visits in my absence?" he questioned. "Tell me the truth now, or we part for ever! Speak!"

She stood with her clasped hands dropped before her; her alarmed eyes riveted upon his face. "He has been here!" she said.

"Has he ever spoken of love to you?"

"He has never asked to be aught but a friend."

Mr. Benzoni's lip curled with bitter scorn. "What need to ask? You knew of his love, and he knew it. I saw it before I went away. And he has played the lover ever since. You hesitate to name the day of our marriage; you

have not decided between us yet, or you prefer to coquette with two while you can. You mean to put me off as long as possible, and then, perhaps marry my fine villa—you will take me because I am the richest."

"Oh, Giovanni! this from you!" She covered her face with her hands, and wept passionately. Her accent went to his heart.

"Sit down, Judith," he said; "let us talk of this. You Americans fear the Bible." He went to the table, and took one. "Will you swear on this Holy Book to tell me all the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?" With one hand he drew hers from her face.

"I will swear, Giovanni!" and she reverently kissed the Holy Book, and looked into his eyes with less fear.

"Did Cardover's sister send him for you, or did he come himself to ride with you alone this evening?"

"He came himself."

"Then you told me a lie!"

"Yes," she said, seeing the old love come in his eyes; "you looked at me so terribly I was afraid of you."

"How many times have you been out to ride with him?"

"Two or three."

"The whole truth, Judith."

"Four times exactly."

"You could not love me entirely, and yet flirt with another while under promise of marriage to me. Which of us do you love?"

"You!" and a very slight smile played around her mouth; it was full of indescribable coquetry and mischief. From the moment she had gazed in his eyes she saw that he could not break from her side; she felt her power, and her terror subsided into a wholesome fear. She saw the necessity of speaking the whole truth.

"Why did you treat him as a lover?"

"I didn't."

"You certainly did. Why did you encourage his attentions?"

"I don't know."

"You knew it was a wrong to me?"

"I thought you'd forgive me if you ever found it out." A hardly perceptible smile passed over Mr. Benzoni's face. She spoke with such a childlike air, and looked like such a sweet, irresponsible little charmer, that he could not find it in his heart to chide her more. She continued looking down, marking letters on the cover of the Bible with a pin.

"Are you going to flirt this way after we are married, Judith?"

"Will you let me? I'll do as you think best."

"I imagine I shall *not* let you. Tell me now that you are very sorry for your bad conduct, and give me twenty kisses."

"I shall not."

"What! what!"

"Tell *me* first that you will never frighten me so again. Never! as long as you live. I don't want to be afraid of you, when you are my husband. I won't marry you, if you are going to terrify me to death, and make me cry every day."

"Did I terrify you so, sweet child?"

The quarrel was made up. Their love and joy seemed perfect. But far back in the quiet, unheeded depths of their hearts a new knowledge was garnered; a new fear of each other slept there, but slept lightly, ready to be awakened upon occasion. Judith had been startled by the vindictive and suspicious glances that flashed from her lover's eyes, and over the now closed door in her spirit she wrote, "In future be cautious before him."

"Over the same silent door in his heart the Italian

wrote, unconsciously, "Watch!" Through his mind the figure of Grace floated, and if she was not beguiling as the new charmer, she wore a robe of innocence, and her smile was guileless as an infant's. There was too much of purity and heaven about her to seduce wholly a heart that had no leaning towards such things.

It was the day before Judith's marriage. She sat in her own room, half buried amid laces, silks, velvets and embroideries. It was early morning, and the dressmakers had not yet arrived to put the finishing touches upon her apparel. She looked out of the window, and saw Grace training some vines over a trellis. "I wish that girl was dead!" she mused. "Wretch! I hate her! I could kill her! Giovanni loves me I know; but he *has* loved her, and I wish she did not cumber the earth. Her sanctimoniousness will always come to his mind, whenever I show any human imperfection. Thank fortune, she has not beauty like mine! She looks pale, and more slender than she did. I hope she will fall into a hopeless consumption. Well! I may as well turn to more pleasant thoughts. I may as well remember how fortunate and happy I am. Father is pleased enough at the idea of my marriage. I do not believe there is a woman upon earth happier than I am. My noble Giovanni!"

Mrs. Morton's entrance interrupted her daughter's cogitations. She was a pale, delicate woman, whom Frank strongly resembled, but she did not possess his off-hand frankness. She was timid in her air, even in entering the chamber of her own child.

"How do you get along with your work, Judith? Can you get every thing done to-day?" she asked.

"Of course I can!"

"But here is still an immense deal of sewing. Those poor girls will have to sit up all night to finish it."

"What if they do? it won't hurt them!"

"Why here, Judith. These two dresses might be left until you get to Europe; they are so heavy you will not need them at all."

"But I have a notion that I shall have them made, for all that."

"One more day, my child, then we shall be parted!" Tears forced themselves into the mother's eyes.

"Yes, that is the way the world goes. Where is that ribbon I want? Oh, here it is."

"You will write often, dear, won't you?"

"Oh, yes, mother; you need not feel so badly about it. Girls always get married, you know."

"But oceans do not always roll between parents and children!"

"No. We shall come back and visit you. Giovanni says I may come whenever I wish to."

"Ah, yes. I have known lovers often to make such promises—but when they become husbands they do not always fulfil them."

"Well, Giovanni is not one of that sort."

"So all young girls think of their lovers. You will find, my poor Judith, that men are not like women; they think of their own comfort first, and their wives second."

"Lord! mother, don't talk in that strain. All men are not alike. I acknowledge that father makes your comfort a very secondary thing. But the man that imagines he can impose on me in like manner, will find himself mistaken."

"I know that your disposition is very different from mine. But, oh dear! I'm so miserable! Oh, Judith! how I wish you loved me, as some girls love their mothers!"

"Why, I do love you, mother."

"Yes, perhaps so. When you were born, Judith, I was the happiest of human beings. I worshipped you; I never

knew before then, what a fountain of love there was in my soul. And do you love me, Judith?"

"Yes, indeed, mother." Tears rose in her eyes, and she kissed tenderly the pale face before her.

"Oh, Judith! how I wish it were in my power to shield you from all suffering. I wish Mr. Benzoni were a Christian. I am not one myself, neither is your father, but men are not to be trusted, unless they have strong principles."

Judith turned pale, but she answered,

"If Mr. Benzoni had been a Christian, he would probably never have been your son-in-law. He would have remained tied to Grace Percival, whether he loved her or not."

"If he had been a Christian, his affections would not have wandered from her."

Judith's face grew still more pale with dread of the future—her own coquettish nature led her to believe that constancy was a rare thing in man or woman. Mrs. Morton sobbed in silence; every few moments she roused herself to say—

"Oh, dear! girls would never marry, if they knew when they were well off! Never, never! Oh, dear!"

Judith stitched away impatiently, while a miserable fever of anxiety stirred in her heart. Mrs. Morton broke forth again:

"Whenever I go to a wedding, it seems more gloomy to me than a funeral."

"Well, mother, I should think you had said enough, without bringing up that old woman's stereotype speech. It is very natural that some anxieties should mingle with my happiness. You ought to cheer me, instead of showing me the dark side. A bride always has heavy fears when she takes this irrevocable step, even if her husband is the most devoted man in the world. She may be leaving her buoy-

ant health, with her girlhood; she may be leaving freedom, for days and nights of care, and watching, and weariness. I know all this, but like every other young girl, I hope I shall escape all the sorrows of married life, and only enjoy its pleasures."

"I hope you may."

Here a voice sounded along the stairway.

"Come down from your nest, little birdie."

A joyful flush overspread Judith's face at the familiar voice, and she bounded from the room, while her mother was uttering,

"Now, Judith, you're not going to talk nonsense two or three hours, when there is so much to do? Why don't Mr. Benzoni come at sunrise? He is here all the time."

"Mother is scolding me for leaving my work," laughed the bride elect, as she met her lover.

"Scolding you, is she?" he smilingly returned. "How could any one scold such a little angel? What work have you to do? These little hands were not made to work. I want you to take a horseback ride with me. Will you get ready? Wear your velvet riding hat. You look superbly in that, with your ringlets waving down. I have the horses at the door. I must let my bachelor friends envy me once more, before I rob their eyes of your beauty."

CHAPTER XIV.

Frank Morton, in the innocence of ignorance, had mentioned to us the day that Judith was to be married. Then he carelessly turned to Josephine, and said, "Move, Josey, it is your turn." They were sitting by the window, playing checquers; he had no dream of the emotions he had sent into the heart of Grace. After that day, whenever she raised her eyes, they looked as if an inward conflict was going on within her. She was torn by contending spirits. How could she bow her neck and say, "Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those who trespass against us.*"

And now the day for the marriage had arrived. She was pale and quiet, but when I looked within her haggard eyes, I saw that the angel of peace tarried on his way to her. In the afternoon she said, "Where did Walter put the key of the church? I will go and play on the organ."

I found her the key, secretly delighted that she would not be at home to see the young bride leave with her gay friends for the church, where she was to be wedded. The two churches were not very far apart. Grace left us, and then Cousin Mary and I talked freely and sadly about her. A restless feeling possessed me as I thought of all that was going on, and I thirsted to get into the open air, where I

should not hear the low muffled tread of feet in the adjoining house; it fell upon my nerves almost as uneasily as if Grace were present to hear it.

I rolled up a little painting, and prepared for a walk to Mr. Cardover's store. I did not wish to see him on this day, but I could think of no other errand that would take me out of doors. He was usually back in the store, and seldom came forward except to meet an acquaintance.

I ventured forth, and slowly pursued my way through the thronged streets; it was the hour for men to turn homeward from their business, although the summer sun had not descended to its rest. I reached the store, and glided in. Only a tall young man stood near the door.

"There," said I, bowing and smiling, and laying in his hand my picture; then I turned to go out.

"Miss Hamilton, won't you see"—

"Not to-day; I am in a hurry," I replied, interrupting him, and I went on my way. I heard a city clock strike. It was the wedding hour. A fitting time it was to pronounce vows solemn and hopeful. The lingering sun had disappeared, but the heavens were bathed in a golden splendor where it had just shone. The long shadows fell dreamily upon the pavements; the quick tread of home-seeking workmen had died away; only quiet steps sounded upon the street. Occasionally, cheery shouts from boys who were playing a dearly loved game, broke upon my ear. I drew near a fine Gothic church; it stood in the softened light, with half open doors, as if inviting my entrance. I dropped my veil, and wondered if I should steal in and behold the beautiful bride, or pass on. I knew by the low, then triumphal tones of the organ, that the marriage party had arrived. I went in very quietly, and took a seat away from the light, where I was shaded by a pillar. It was designed to be a very private wedding, therefore the church was not wholly

lit. Around the altar and down the middle aisle a blaze of lamps shed their brilliance. The bridal party stood at the altar; it consisted only of Judith and Mr. Benzoni, with a dozen intimate friends or relatives. The bride and groom looked glorious in beauty, glorious in happiness; the eyes of Judith were bent down; upon her cheeks roses of love had pressed their sweetness; the dew of bliss rested upon her warm lips. Her snowy dress seemed airy and transparent; a wreath of orange flowers crowned her, and a veil of illusion lace waved around her, giving to her whole figure the aerial grace we attach to the presence of an angel. Well might her lover's heart swell triumphantly as her white-gloved hand rested on his arm, for she was matchless in her dower of brilliance and beauty. Well might he exult, for he had now what he most prized in woman, physical beauty, fascination of manner, and graceful wit. Almost at this moment might he seem excused for loving her, inasmuch as these things are precious in woman, costly gifts from the Creator. Fancy might have invested him with a sort of heroic splendor, as he bowed himself over the hand of his beloved, and kissed it. Even here his jealousy set the example; it would not have pleased him that gentlemen should kiss her cheek, even though they were relatives. The ceremony was nearly completed as I entered the church. They stood amid the blaze of lamps; in their joy they thought not of the exultation of a father's heart, the regret of a mother's. Did they dream of another sweet, breaking heart gazing out from eyes so haggard? Poor, crouching heart! it shrunk away amid shadows that seemed everlasting!—with all its wealth, it kneeled before a redeeming God, and prayed for a cup of water only to allay its anguish!—prayed to sleep in its terrible poverty, sleep only!

I looked on the beautiful and exultant ones. A blessing had just sounded from the lips of the holy man; a blessing

on them—it had sounded through the aisles, it had sounded through the galleries; it had trembled through a mother's listening heart. But had the blessing of Him whose name is Love, descended into their selfish heaven? Had they not seized forbidden fruit? Had they ever heard the words, "To him that *overcometh* will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God?"

Happy voices spoke their congratulations; sweet rejoicing laughter came to my ears; the rich tones of the bridegroom reached me, rich and dulcet with pure joy, and then floated towards me clearer music from the lips of the love-beaming bride. Above all this, the organ poured its soft notes of gratulation. I stole softly from the church, ere the bridal party started down the aisle.

I concluded to go to our own church before I went home, to see if Grace were still there. A bright twilight pervaded the vestry room as I opened the door and entered; the organ was hushed. I looked within the main body of the building. Grace was kneeling before the altar, with her face buried in her hands; her broken sobs and prayers went quivering from her lips.

"O my Father," broke low from her, "thou hast taken from my hand the flowers of youth and gladness. Teach me now self-renunciation, that they may be restored to me in thine upper kingdom. Teach me forgiveness, that I may give balm to other souls. Teach me to feel that my destiny may be more sublime for this suffering. Help *them* to walk with Thee." As if soothed by the words she had uttered, she remained quiet, with her face still bowed upon her hands. I stole noiselessly to the farther part of the vestry room, and looked out of the window, waiting until she should be ready to go. I could not interrupt her holy prayers. The gray shadows of evening came down; the moon arose and flooded the room where I sat with a still serenity: in

its calm light I drooped my face upon the window-sill, and prayed that peace might flow into the sorrowful soul near me.

I heard Grace rise from the altar. I rose, and met her as she came in the vestry room.

"I thought, darling," I said, taking her hand, "I would come for you. I have been down town."

"Have you? I thank you, Kate. I did not think it was so late;" and she looked at the moon through the window. As her face was turned towards it, I saw from its serene expression that God had sent down his angel to strengthen her when her renunciation was complete. A clear, sparkling jewel was set in her spirit's crown that night; she saw it not in all its radiance, for the soul's morning twilight encompassed her, although the night was past.

She clasped both arms around me, and kissed me with a calm fervor, saying, "You have often strengthened me, Kate. I think I shall be sustained now by the arm of the Most High. Forgive me that I have added so little to your happiness lately. I need the forgiveness of all—they have all been so patient with me. Some angel seems to assure me that my sorrow may shower blessings upon other hearts—not now altogether, but it may run like a holy thing through my life, and may distil words of love and cheer to the hopeless—I pray that it may remind me at every step to drop seeds of grace and truth by the way, then it will bless me. Shall we go, dear?"

As we emerged into the street, a miserably clad beggar girl approached us and asked alms. We had nothing to give her.

"Do you beg every day, my poor girl?" asked Grace.

"Yes ma'am," returned the girl; "I can't help it—I havn't got any relations, and the woman that keeps me says

I shan't stay if I don't beg enough to pay for my board." She passed on, but Grace cried,

"Stop a moment;" so she stopped.

"Don't she look honest, Kate?" demanded Grace.

"I think she does. Are you thinking of her as maid of all work?"

"Yes. Mary wants a girl about her age." Then turning to the girl, she asked, "How old are you?"

"Fourteen, I guess," was the response.

"What is your name?"

"Mary McConkey."

"Shall we venture to take her home, Kate?" Grace looked at me eagerly.

"Perhaps she had better go to her own home to-night, and endeavor to wash and beautify a little before Cousin Mary sees her; she is very neat, you know."

"Yes, perhaps that would be better." We both gave the girl considerable instruction in regard to bettering her personal appearance. She was delighted at the prospect of living with us, although we told her Mrs. Rodman was a very particular woman, and would not keep her unless she did just as she told her.

"I'll try! I'll try with all my might!" she answered with an honest, eager smile. "May I walk behind you to see where you live, so I can find it in the morning?"

We gave our consent, and laid plans for instructing her as we walked along. Our meeting with her seemed one of those sweet, humble providences that so often befall us at the time they are needed. I thought when we reached home, and saw carriages standing before Mr. Morton's house, they gave Grace a lighter pang, because she could turn to the beggar girl and say,

"Good-bye, my child; come to-morrow," in a tone of

such sweet gentleness; her heart leaned upon contemplated kindness to that little outcast.

With the morrow came Mary McConkey! She looked so radiant and delighted through her clean, shining face, that Cousin Mary's heart was taken forthwith. She was installed into the family affections with enthusiasm. Gertrude and Josephine were quite overcome with admiration of her good nature and willingness to work, while they were steeped in pity for her past forlorn condition. They uttered a great many "ohs" and "ahs," as they drew from her her history, and were perpetually flitting from her to us, to relate some incident in her life. Gertrude had calmly undertaken the education of the damsel, and proposed to lead her as far as astronomy and French, in the full conviction that she would make a superior person, and would probably marry a rich man and live in great splendor. We allowed her to indulge her innocent and cordial hopes, believing time would prove her *protegé* to be only an Irish girl of ordinary capacity and great good nature.

Home grew bright and peaceful. A new sunny atmosphere encircled it; every face was tranquil. Poor James had left the city on business a day or two after Grace had rejected him. He did not propose returning under a month.

CHAPTER XV

A YEAR had flown. Judith Benzoni sat in her fair Italian home, and gazed out from her window into the garden of the villa, where little fountains played, and threw up freshening jets of water; rich and sweet-smelling flowers perfumed the air, goldened by the declining sun; bright rays brightened up the graceful statues which were relieved by deep green foliage in the background. Beyond, the river Tiber flowed, and reflected the sunset brilliance, and shadowed the trees in the water. Here and there, an old and broken ruin hallowed the scene with memories of the past. But the idle heart of the American woman cared not to live in the olden days. Her enthusiasm for Rome had gone by; ruins were a bore. The interior of her beautiful home, which she had taken such delight in arranging with Oriental luxury and modern extravagance, no longer captivated her thoughts. She glanced around the apartment in which she sat, with a half curved lip, as if she said to herself, "Very handsome, nothing could be more voluptuous or in better taste, but what of it? These fine things add to one's satisfaction, please one's vanity, but they fill no void in the heart." Was there already a void in Judith's heart? Not particularly, only she felt like most persons without an aim in life, and with much idle time on hand. She was dissatisfied that she

was not happy every instant—that she grew tired of this and that. She was very happily married, she said, within herself, but it was so tiresome never to dress and beautify except for Giovanni. She loved him beyond expression, she was sure, but it was so dismal to think the excitement of coquetting was all over—to think she must settle down and be as staid and serious as if she were fifty. She never could look at a man that Giovanni's great black eyes were not upon her, scrutinizing her deportment. What harm was there in being admired? She wanted nothing more than admiration. True, she should like to be a Laura to some gifted Petrarch; still she would make it a point to sail above his head, even more majestically than Laura did. She never would have an idol but Giovanni, and yet Giovanni had after all turned out rather more human than she had anticipated. He found fault with his dinner sometimes; yawned in her company, stretched out his feet, and wondered where he should go next; often inquired with energy, if she could not say something to amuse a fellow. At such times the fair Judith almost regretted that she had taken him upon her hands; it required one of his fits of adoration to assure her that she had not made a rash journey to Italy. A slight sound brought a warm glow to Judith's cheek, and replaced her idle thoughts with purer ones. An inner door softly opened, and a nurse entered, bearing in her arms a young infant. Judith started up to receive it, and covered it with eager kisses.

"My beautiful! my darling!" she uttered, gazing down with the softest love-light in her eyes. "Fresh as the morning, my baby!" She played with the little one, and her sweet, murmuring tones broke forth from the purest fount in her being. The Italian nurse looked on with smiling pride and fondness. Mr. Benzoni entered; he gazed with tenderness upon the radiant face of Judith, as she held

forth her child for him to kiss, and then lifted up her laughing mouth, saying as she did so, "O, Giovanni, you should have seen how this baby laughed! I worship this child. I never could have believed that I could have loved an infant so. I used to hate the very sight of them. I never could love this so well if it were not my own."

"Not even if you took care of it night and day, madam?" questioned the nurse.

"No!" said Judith. She spoke truly, for it was not in her selfish nature to love for love's dear sake, for pity's sake. The child began to fret and cry.

"Take her, Marie," said the young mother, with a perplexed look. The woman tenderly held the little one to her heart, as she went from the room.

"Giovanni," said Judith lightly, "I am going to make it a rule never to see that child when she is cross. I am only going to have pleasure and sunshine connected with my idea of her. If there is any thing that robs life of poetry it is a squalling child." Judith smilingly seated herself upon her husband's knee, and placing her pretty palm under his chin, bade him look out upon the sunset.

"It is very beautiful, my love," he answered. After a pause he added, "I think you must forget that even you yourself must sometimes have been cross, and have required a mother's care."

"Oh, yes! but do you suppose I am going to sacrifice my sensibilities every time the baby cries, when the nurse understands what ails her so much better than I do? I love my child, but I have no idea of wasting my youth and beauty as a nursery drudge."

"You are very conscious of your beauty, Judith."

"Yes, I am!" she smiled.

"I should prize it more, if you prized it less."

"You taught me to value it. You and a dozen other

gentlemen. You flatter us before marriage; you do your best to instil into our minds the idea that we monopolize every perfection, and when we at last are convinced that we possess a few graces, you are shocked that we believe it."

"I do not wish that you should sacrifice your youth or beauty in unnecessary cares, but you never look lovelier to me than when you have our child in your arms."

"You like to see me hold her when she is screaming, do you?"

"I like to see you try to soothe her."

"Yes! that all sounds very well. But I happen to remember your stopping your ears the other morning, and beseeching me to hand over that 'miserable little being' to Marie, when I was really trying to quiet her in the most motherly manner. Now, Giovanni, look me right in the eyes, because I want to tell you a peculiarity of yours. You are very apt to blame me for the very things you indulge yourself in. I could name a number of things set down in my memory, but I'll let you go this time." Judith spoke playfully, but she rose and sat by the window, leaning out a little, and shading her face with her hand to conceal its moodiness.

"What do you refer to, Judith? What have you got set down in your memory against me?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"Yes, tell me!"

"Well, for one thing! No one loves entire freedom better than you do. You do not even like to have me ask you where you have been, and what you have been doing, sometimes. But you do not like to have me go any where without your consent; and when we are in company, you direct me as though I were a child. You call the carriage, and take me home at any instant it may suit you—make me break off frequently in a conversation in which I am inter-

ested, and forbid my acquaintance with persons who seek mine, and whom our friends can find no objection to. I do not mean to find fault," she continued, noticing a deep flush and a dark look upon her husband's face, "but Giovanni, you might give me a little more freedom. American husbands are not afraid to trust their wives."

"You do not understand the difference between this country and yours,—the men and women are different,—the manners are different. I have seen more of the world than you have."

"But you used to say, Giovanni, that you should always let me do as I pleased. I do not want to do any thing wrong, but I want you to say, 'Do so and so, if you wish,' instead of almost forcing me to submit to your way."

"Then you consider me a tyrant?"

"Oh, no; far from it. You are the most indulgent of men in most respects."

The conversation dropped; each party occasionally stole a glance at the other. Mr. Benzoni at last exclaimed suddenly, "Oh! here are letters from America."

"Give them to me," said Judith, with an animated smile, as she stretched out her hand. She was soon engrossed in their contents.

"Well, what news?" demanded her husband, as she looked up after perusing them. "Is that last letter from your mother?"

"Yes; shall I read it for you? There is nothing very striking in it."

"Read on."

And Judith read:

"My dearest Child,—You know how I hate to write letters: I would not write to anybody but you. I even make Frank write to your father in my place. You ought to see Frank. I am so proud of him; he grows so handsome, and

he is very intellectual, I can assure you. He has been spoilt in his bringing up, in a measure; but he has a noble nature, for all that. He is very different from your ——. Well, I won't say it. I always believe in being prudent. How is Mr. Benzoni? Is he as kind as he was at first? I hope he is, from the bottom of my heart. When are you coming home to make a visit? I was so delighted to hear that you have a fine baby, and that you are getting along so nicely. Now, Judith, I hope you will try to be a good mother,—to instil good principles into your child. Is Mr. Benzoni fond of the baby? There is very little news to write. Walter Gray has become heir to a fortune through a rich old uncle. He is travelling in Europe now. I told him that he must be sure to visit you if he was in your quarter of the world. He said he would. That Mr. Bedell, whom you used to make so much fun of, has become quite a genteel young man: they say he is a great student. Frank says he wanted Grace Percival, but she would not have him. She does not seem to have any beaux. There is a Mr. Waldron who goes there once in a while. You inquired about her, so I asked Josy if her aunt Grace was going to be married. I do not think she is unhappy; she always seems cheerful, although she has not the bright look she used to have. The Rodmans seem to be getting along quite comfortably. I hope Grace will get a good husband some of these days, if she ever does marry. But you know my opinion. I think it better to remain single, whenever a woman has pecuniary means. Give my love to Mr. Benzoni. Your father sends a great deal of love, Frank too. Write very soon. I am sure you would write oftener, if you knew how glad I am to get your letters.

Your affectionate mother,

MARTHA MORTON.

When Judith had reached the name of Grace her color had heightened, but she had kept on in the same quiet tone. As she laid the letter aside, she fixed a keen glance upon her husband's face, which was turned towards the window. "I wonder if Grace will marry that Waldron," said Mr. Benzoni. "She is a good girl."

"You thought, at one time, there was too much milk and water about her," said Judith.

"Oh, yes," responded Benzoni. "You and I are far better suited. I never loved her as I loved you, Judith."

The wife noticed that he said *loved* instead of love, and bitter thoughts gathered about her.

"Would you like to visit America soon?" inquired Giovanni.

"The baby is too young. We had better not think of it at present."

Giovanni whistled, and soon after left the room. Judith leaned her face upon the broad window seat, and murmured, "I wish he were less like me. Grace might captivate him yet, were they to meet. It would be a rich revenge for her. Sometimes the dreadful thought that he is tired of me, comes across me. I never know how deeply my happiness is bound up in him, until some jealous thought of Grace convinces me of it. I know that I am wilful and exacting, and often pout for hours when I am displeased. Once he said that Grace had a very different disposition from mine. Ah well! marriages always become tame affairs. Love does not survive matrimony more than a year or two at most. I must learn to amuse myself as I can. I must learn not to depend on him for happiness."

An hour or two went slowly by; the wife was studying how to do without her husband's affection, rather than how to retain it. Her head was still bowed in thought, when the sweet tones of a flute were borne to her ear. She started, as

she recognized a familiar air; a smile stole to her lips as she repeated half disdainfully, "Walter Gray; this beautiful land has awakened his romance again." She listened quietly until the music ceased; she half expected to see the musician ushered into her room. Ere long, her husband returned, bringing Mr. Gray with him, who extended his hand to Judith with frank cordiality.

"I have been playing under your window, Mrs. Benzoni," he exclaimed, "trying to recall thoughts of your native land. Did you guess who it was?"

"Yes; I had learned through my mother that you were in Italy."

"Ah, this beautiful Italy! I fear I never shall be able to leave it. I have been perfectly happy since I have been here. Shall you ever return to America to live, Mr. Benzoni?"

"Perhaps I may. We are well suited here at present, however."

Mr. Gray talked with a freedom and zest that assured Mrs. Benzoni that no fatal effects had resulted from his love-disappointment. The gentlemanly ease of his manner, his frank, cheerful eyes, and cordial laugh piqued her vanity. She had expected to see him pining in true Byronic style: she made herself as fascinating as lay in her power; ere Walter Gray left, his eyes sought her face often, to marvel at her bewildering beauty: he caught every witchery of her manner, and thought a laugh so sweet and joyous had never reached his ears. Judith noticed without dissatisfaction that she had tempted the evil spirit in her husband,—the demon of jealousy, which was ever ready to start into life, with or without occasion. It gave her a malicious pleasure to give rein to her coquetries before his very eyes; to dash aside with recklessness the strong hand which had restrained her freedom. Her brilliant, defiant glance fell like fire upon her husband's

clouded brow; he rose, and left the room abruptly. Walter arose also, wondering to find it so late.

"Come often, that we may talk of America," said Mrs. Benzoni.

"I will do so with pleasure," he rejoined.

Weeks passed away, and only a sullen silence prevailed between husband and wife. Mr. Benzoni had at first endeavored to convince Judith that her manners were unbecoming a married lady.

"How unbecoming, pray?" she demanded.

"You laughed too much."

"Pshaw! I am glad to get a chance to laugh once in a while. If you intend to play the ogre, I shall not trouble *you* with laughing."

"Madame Benzoni, have a care!" he exclaimed fiercely. "I think you have not understood your husband's disposition. If you are not guarded in your conduct; if after to-day you prove yourself less than a prudent and obedient wife, you will find yourself *there*, beneath my foot!" he stamped it, and eyed her with a passionate malignity that made her shudder. She restrained the sneer she dared not show, and contented herself with soliloquizing, "Old fool! he'll get over it before long. He shall make the first advances to me for this." Consequently she maintained a reserved demeanor, and suspended all the winning ways which had power over her husband's heart. If for a moment she felt ready to relent, the remembrance of his angry and insulting speech awoke all the resentment of her nature. Occasionally Walter dropped in, and often succeeded in chasing the gloom from her anxious face. She thought within herself, "How much kinder he would have been to me!" and even in her husband's presence her tone was more tender to him than it ought to have been. Yet she was supremely miserable; for each day deepened the rigid coldness of her husband's manner, until she felt that

she was hateful in his sight. And then, when it seemed to her too late to win him back, a wild, intolerable thirst for his lost love came over her. On her knees, she supplicated for victory over her pride, and sometimes even started to cast herself at Giovanni's feet, to beseech him to fold her to his heart once more, and she would be a child to obey his will,—only a dutiful child,—a loving, adoring wife. But his cold, repelling look fell like ice upon her spirit, and started into being a reckless defiance against him, that hardened her into flint. If Walter came at such a time, her wild gayety and impassioned bitterness excited his wonder. One evening her husband had left her in such a mood; she had for the first time spoken to Walter with a gush of tears, of the happy days when she was free.

Mr. Benzoni entered as the words were on her lips; he saw the tears she had proudly checked in his presence. His dark suspicions of her guilty love for Walter were now confirmed.

Walter himself had been embarrassed at her careless imprudence of speech, and his manner was confused at the sudden but quiet entrance of Mr. Benzoni. He took his leave, he hardly knew how, except that it was under the fiery glances of the jealous husband: he hastened into the dim street, and pondered Judith's fate. It was plain, he thought, that she was unhappy; she seemed glad of his friendship; almost she seemed to seek it: she had often said when they parted, "Come again."

And Walter had obeyed, the while a "still small voice" arose in his soul to dissuade him. Now her tears had affected him with a deeper and more thrilling interest; he yearned to comfort her, and this yearning overpowered altogether that "still small voice." He paced up and down, wondering when he should see Madame Benzoni again. Suddenly he thought

of a letter which he had received on his way to Judith's, and had not read.

Ah, bewildering woman! there was an angel at hand, who was to lead a careless spirit down into the healing waters, that he might see with clearer vision. The letter was from Grace. Walter read it under a street lamp. In it occurred this passage:

"My brother Walter (let me call you so), I think so often how you are surrounded with temptations, with no mother to counsel and plead with you, that you may keep the narrow way, and go "from strength to strength," as you pursue the path of life. Perhaps you do not reflect that every act is one round of a ladder that will lead upward, or it is one round of a ladder that will lead downward. I tremble for the integrity of your spirit. Understand me, dear Walter, I tremble for you as I would for a dear brother whom I loved because of the existence of a thousand noble qualities and pure aspirations. I have no fear that you will ever fall into gross vices, but you are moving in a new world now; one that seduces the spirit from energy, and faith and purity. Pardon me that I send a warning, supplicating voice over the sea; pardon me that I pray you, now that all restraints are removed, to keep the inner temple of your being sacred to holy purposes and innocent thoughts; let not this new possession of wealth become a source of evil—a means to deteriorate your life, rather than to ennoble it. Good and gentle deeds will lead you up a shining pathway to where the beauteous heavens open. Let not careless dreams lead you to forget the pitfalls of earth—mark the passing hours with gold, and the treasure will be laid up for you. Dear brother, do you hear me? Are you still the same? Do you recall the conversations we have had?—they strengthened us for the life-battle. Do you understand how my heart yearns to

see you all that is noble and good?—or will you lightly forget the prayerful words of "GRACE."

"Yes, generous heart, I have heard you!" came from the lips of Walter, as he dashed his hand across his eyes, and plunged the letter in his pocket. He walked slowly up and down, thinking of "old times," and contrasting his forgotten aspirations with his present state. He instituted an earnest self-examination; he realized for the first time that his *vanity* was flattered by the interest of the beautiful Madame Benzoni; he saw that her influence was directly opposite the heaven-inspiring effect which Grace always had upon him. He remembered the heartless manner in which Judith had trifled with his honest love, and the cruel indifference with which she had consigned Grace to suffering, because *she* was incapable of noble self-sacrifice. Walter wondered that he had ever renewed his acquaintance with Mrs. Benzoni; it began to look like a very unwise act. He had desired to see her in the first place that she might learn how totally old feelings had died out of his heart: and then he had wished to show her how generously a lover could change into a friend. He felt a little self-contempt after having sifted his motives thoroughly; new resolves sprung up within him.

He walked away amid the murky shadows of the night to his lodgings, and as he walked, he murmured, "You have saved me, angel across the sea!"

It was nearly morning when he entered his solitary room. He sat down and penned a polite note to Mr. Benzoni, saying a letter from America had decided him to leave for Germany the next morning; he should therefore be prevented from paying his farewell respects to Mr. and Mrs. Benzoni. As he sealed his little note, he imagined that it would make matters straight between the husband and wife; if the former had indulged a little jealousy, he would now see that there

would be no future occasion for it. Little did Walter Gray comprehend how strong a hold vile suspicions had over the mind of the Italian.

Walter drew forth another sheet of paper and wrote to Grace.

"DEAR, HONORED SISTER,—I am at a loss for words to express the debt of thanks I owe you—a debt I cannot cancel. Your letter came at a critical moment of my life. Yes, Grace, I was just losing my hold of the high aims I once had. I was not projecting wrong deeds, but I was dreaming that I would seek the pleasure of the moment, and glide along with the stream into any haven that God or fate might waft me to. You addressed me from impulse, and the earnest impulse struck my soul with a conviction that I must turn instantly around and retrace the moral steps I had been taking. I do believe, Grace, that the Divine Being always lends us an angel to lead us aright when we waver. We do not heed the spiritual presence that bids us beware. Many times in my life, I have noticed slight occurrences that led me from a wrong course. Your letter is one of many. I love you, sister Grace, for the confidence you have used towards me—it has been the pebble which has turned the whole current of my being. After reading your letter, I could not sleep until I had changed all my plans—the aims and objects of yesterday are not the aims and objects of to-day, or those which shall engross my most devoted attention hereafter. Yesterday I had no strength to wrestle for the noble in life and action. To-day a strain is poured forth upon my ear, by one who is interested in my well-being. I listen!—its siren song wins me from the lulling dreams that lead down to the chambers of guilt—calls me back to the paths which are strewed with flowers of purity, wherein the honorable walk. Hark! she sings of the great, the good, who are "not for a day, but

for all time." Look! she points where, at the goal, the victor is crowned with an evergreen wreath.

I am going to Germany to-morrow. I shall devote myself to music—and if I chance to see a poor fellow chafing under destiny as I once did, I will lend him a helping hand.

The gray of morning is stealing into my windows. Thanks, heartfelt thanks for your voice, dear Grace. Your gently reproving, kindly persuading strain has not been poured forth altogether in vain for your friend,

WALTER GRAY."

Walter was of a chivalrous nature, therefore Grace's letter went to his generous soul. Another might have received the same words with indifference. Grace had ever seemed to him of a heavenly nature, yet his deep attachment for her was entirely without passion. In the olden days he would have fought for her in the tournament, and would have knelt to have kissed the border of her robe. Grace would have smiled with astonishment could she have seen the high place she occupied in Walter's mind as a perfect woman. She regarded herself as an every-day character.

With characteristic enthusiasm, Walter packed up all his baggage, and then knelt down and prayed with uncommon energy and fervor, before committing himself to his bed for a little sleep. The last thought he had before relapsing into entire unconsciousness was, that he was "empty, swept, and garnished," above all weakness or temptation now, quite prepared to enter the new Jerusalem above. He slept serenely, until the noonday sun shone in upon him. That day he started on his travels to Germany—and he also pursued his travels to heaven.

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE thorns I reap, are of the tree I planted." It was with a shuddering terror Judith had caught her husband's glance at the moment those fatal words had left her lips. She felt that to his dark spirit they were "confirmation strong as proof of holy writ." The room reeled before her —a great, black tide of agony came swelling over her breast, swimming about her ears—she started from her chair, as if to grasp something. Walter had hardly closed the door, when she fell prostrate upon the carpet. No tender hand lifted her up, and sought to restore her to life—no murmured lullaby kissed her back to a world of joy and affection. Her husband stood above her, with deep and dreadful curses on his lips—her snowy, jewelled hand lay out upon the dark ground-work of the carpet—he could scarcely forbear setting his iron heel upon it, and crushing it to pieces. He removed the long, waving black ringlets from her face with his boot, and then stooped down to gaze upon her; he clutched her hair, and held it back, as he listened to see if she breathed. "It would take but little to send her to burning perdition now!" he muttered. He still glared upon her, and compressed his lips with a wild, terrible purpose, the offspring of his heated brain. He laid his hand upon

her white throat. Just then a tender, pitiful cry from his babe reached his ear. He paused, and heard the nurse reply in softest tones of endearment.

"Oh God! what was I doing?" he exclaimed, striking his forehead. He started to his feet, and turning his face from Judith, buried it in his hands. A shower of burning tears relieved his frenzy. He gazed again upon the poor senseless heap before him.

Judith sighed heavily, and opened her eyes—her mournful gaze turned to him. He met it unmoved. She raised herself, and uttered entreatingly, "Giovanni, you wrong me!"

"Silence!" he returned, the fiend coming back to his eyes.

"Listen to me, and we may yet be happy!" she implored, dragging herself to the spot where he stood.

"It is my turn to speak, miserable girl. We part for ever to-night!"

"Oh no! no!" she screamed, clasping his knees, and looking up in his face in the wildest agony of prayer. "I have been imprudent, thoughtless, but I am innocent. I am yours, body and soul. Punish me, kill me, but do not forsake me! Oh! I will do any thing, every thing! Sit down, and let me tell you all that is in my heart. I will speak truly, as I expect the judgment-day. I love only you, I have been faithful to you!"

"Faithful!" he sneered, endeavoring to unloose her hold.

"Giovanni!" she cried wildly, starting to her feet, and raising her right hand upward. "There is a mighty God above, who will bring everlasting vengeance on you, if you drive me to madness, and death, and despair, without just cause!"

He looked upon her excited features, and slowly replied,

"You and I gave one soul to drink of despair; we are reaping our reward!"

"Despair! She never knew the fiery serpents of passion that lash and choke my life. I am innocent! Take me, keep me, save me from myself, from God, from hell! Oh! I tremble! I fear every thing! Mercy, Giovanni! have mercy!" She trembled violently, and laid her hand upon his arm. He shook it off.

"For our child's sake!" she whispered.

"The child you have disgraced! Keep her! She is yours; she will be like you. I shall see her no more. I will not run the risk of blushing to call her daughter. Go where you will! Stay here if you will! The world need not know why we have parted. Difference of habit, of disposition." He smiled bitterly as he spoke the last sentence. "Farewell, madam!"

She grasped his arm, and uttered,

"Giovanni!" but he was gone, and she stood there alone. She hurriedly reached the window, and tried to raise it, that she might spring from it, and drink of endless sleep. It resisted her frenzied efforts; she sunk upon a sofa, and hid her face amid its cushions; gradually she lost herself in stupor. The morning light shone in the room, when the forsaken wife awoke from her wretched, terrified sleep. Marie stood by her, with the baby in her arms, looking down with deepest pity; great tears were rolling down her face. She had partially heard the burden of the last night's dispute, and Mr. Benzoni had entered the nursery early that morning, and wept passionately over his child, straining it to his breast, until it cried with pain. He had even said, "Marie, will you be a mother to this child? Will you bring her to me if I write for you?"

And Marie had timidly, yet firmly answered, "I cannot

steal her from her mother—she is hers—she suffered for her."

Mr. Benzoni had answered, "True, she is hers by right." Marie gazed into the uplifted eyes of her mistress some moments, ere the whole dreadful truth came to Judith's spirit. Even in her awakened anguish, the tears of her servant galled her. She waved her hand for her to step aside, and turned her face to the wall.

"Where is Mr. Benzoni?" she at length asked.

"I do not know, madam; he did not say where he was going."

"Go away, Marie!" Marie went, and Judith groaned, and wept, and tore her hair, and cursed her misery, her existence, her impotence.

"Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not,
Hearts may thus be torn away."

A letter was handed to Madame Benzoni; she broke the seal with fevered eagerness, hoping it might be from her husband. It was merely Walter's note. "What a dreadful doom to fall upon me, for a little careless coquetry!" she wept, "and he, that foolish boy, has left me in my loneliness and woe. Alas! if I had some heart to lean upon! Oh! that Giovanni should have driven me into this hopeless abyss!"

Thus the days wore on in abject wretchedness, until pride stole back to its accustomed den. Judith formed her plans; she threw aside the opium wherewith she had drugged her consciousness of pain. She went to her mirror, and saw with surprise the change that had passed over her beauty.

"It shall all come back," she murmured, "and if it be

in human power to effect it, that man shall kneel at my feet as I knelt at his, and as vainly. I will devote my life to convincing him of my innocence, my worth, my charms"—she smiled a ghastly smile, "he shall learn that I am a devoted mother, a faithful friend, a spotless woman, sought by the wisest, the noblest, the best." Judith devoted herself to a course of physical training that won back the roses to her cheeks. She had been greatly admired since her residence in Italy; she had ever drawn about her young men of fashion, and more blasé admirers, yet she had never listened to words that the purest might not hear. Now she closed her doors upon all but those of a higher stamp of morality. She was pitied, courted and caressed by the loveliest women around her. It was only known that her husband had cruelly abandoned her; he provided amply for all her wants, and sought no divorce, therefore she was the sinned against, he the sinning. She cultivated sedulously her conversational gifts, and gracefully enriched her talk with jewels of wit and knowledge. Her idle nature seemed replaced by a totally different one; the clear soprano voice she had taken so little pains to cultivate, she now subjected to the highest training. Her once gay manner was now more fascinating than ever, by its half reserve. The witchery she exercised over the hearts of men, sprung from subtle arts; they dared not acknowledge it, they dared not believe she was aware of it, so pure and chaste was her whole bearing. And yet her stern spirit only thirsted for the day that would bring her revenge; she would scornfully have immolated every heart that amused her. Love for her child sometimes welled passionately into her heart. She strove sometimes to repress it, for she had learned that they suffer most who love most.

CHAPTER XVII.

A YEAR had not made great changes in our family circle. Walter had left us, and James was frequently absent a month at a time on business, although he still called our house home. Mr. Rodman was able to provide for the moderate wants of his family, and still do a little towards paying his debts. He had grown to be an altered man; our cordial interest in him seemed to meet a thoughtful return. We listened often with a sensation of pleasure to remarks of his, which indicated truer views of life and duty—and then after he had left us, we lifted up our eyes to each other, smiling to think how sweet it was to have him accompany us on the heavenly road. Often he was harassed and perplexed about his old business, and his former irritability of manner returned—but it was not seldom that he conquered this, and closed an impatient remark more gently than he had begun it. He never made an apology; he was too proud for that, but sometimes a little act of thoughtfulness seemed to ask his wife to forget a previous harsh word—and then a soft flush would glow on her cheek, and a light would come in her eyes, as if sunrise were breaking over her soul.

It was morning, and the orient light stole through the nursery windows, as I sat and painted there alone. Grace was in our chamber dressing for a brief journey. Miss Cardover was coming to take her in the country to spend a

month with her. Every summer she emigrated with her family to a lovely place, called Blooming Hill. It was but a few miles from Boston. Here a widowed brother resided the year round. I had never seen him. In this sequestered place our minister, Mr. Waldron, also lived in the summer with his aged parents. Miss Cardover had earnestly pressed me to accompany Grace, but I had gratefully declined. I desired to go so much, it was with the greatest reluctance I could compel myself to say "no." But her brother Pliny went there from the city every evening, and I did not care to meet him as often as I should, if I became temporarily a member of the same household. I felt as if I should never recover from the humiliation of having him suspect that he seemed better and brighter to me than any other human being. It was a proud satisfaction to me to know that he thought I was not attracted to him. I strove to show this not eagerly, or arrogantly, but quietly and naturally. He had been so gentle to Grace; a transient wonder if he loved her sometimes flashed over me; I feared it, and then the fear glided away to come again another time. I knew that he pitied her for the blight that had fallen upon her youth; and I knew that Grace preferred always to walk with him if other gentlemen sought to attend her from church. If we went to places of amusement, James always fell to my lot, because Grace would not go with him; thus she and Mr. Cardover seemed always naturally to go together. I had long since made a resolution not to let my thoughts dwell upon him; sometimes unbidden they broke upon me, and whispered, "He does not love Grace." So I was thinking and dreaming in the orient light, with my elbow on the table, and my head upon my hand; my painting was forgotten. I had hoped in days past that Grace would return the feelings with which Mr. Waldron regarded her; very soon after Mr. Benzoni left for Italy, he had sought Grace often;

but the instant she felt sure that his frequent calls were designed for her, she had assumed a coldness of demeanor that led to his staying away: her suffering and chilled heart was dead then to new hopes and affections. Now she felt differently, and another might interest her. Who would be the magician?

While I was thus indulging in reverie, a light, quick tap sounded on the nursery-door. I opened it, and gave entrance to Miss Cardover, who looked as cheery as sunshine itself.

"Oh, Kitty," she said, "it is too bad in you not to go with us. I have Pliny's light carriage at the door; it will hold three very well—won't you go?"

"I think not," I returned, smiling. "I thank you with all my heart."

"If you thanked me very much, you would go with us," she exclaimed, with a little peremptory shake of her head. "I am going to drive myself, in real country fashion. Is Grace nearly ready?"

"Yes; she will be down presently. I heard one of the children running up stairs as you came in, to tell her."

"Pliny would have driven us to Blooming Hill, but I had a faint hope that you would go, and therefore told him there would not be room for him. Now I suppose he will think he might have enjoyed Grace's society as well as not."

"Probably," I answered. My heart gave a sudden beat—a dreadful beat.

"Has Grace forgotten Mr. Benzoni?" pursued Miss Cardover.

"I think she has overcome her affection for him," I returned. "She has lost her esteem for him of course."

"I always thought she and Pliny were made for each other. They are both so good, so noble, so heroic," said Miss Cardover. "I felt when Pliny was disappointed in

Miss Morton, and Grace in Mr. Benzoni, that Providence had reserved them for each other. Please do not mention what I have said to Grace."

"No, I will not."

Grace came down all smiles. She looked so young, so cheerful, as if sweet views of life and destiny were folded to her heart. It seemed as if they had suddenly withered from mine.

"Good-bye, dear, darling Kate!" she said, pressing her fresh lips on my cheek.

"Oh, I am going to the door with you," I said, and followed them down stairs. Cousin Mary, the children, and Mary McConkey gathered in the hall to say "Good bye." And so they left us.

A week after I received the following note from Grace:

"Blessed Katy, (excuse the blessed, for I feel like pronouncing benedictions upon every thing and every body,) you must and shall come here and make a little visit. Kate, it seems strange to me that you should not want to come, when they would be so glad to have you. I am afraid they will think you are indifferent to their warm feelings towards you, if you do not come. We have such charming times! Such a spell of freshness has stolen over me since I have been here. I am so happy, happier than I have been, Kate, since Giovanni left me. I do not lament that now. I believe it was the most fortunate event that could have happened to me. We wander in the woods, by the sea-shore—Nature has opened her innermost treasures to me, and I walk amid her glories, as if they were leading me to the open gate of Heaven. That terrible incubus is thrown from my spirit, and it bounds backward to its youth, and onward to a hitherto unrevealed world of gladness and glory. I may again

weep, but not so hopelessly. I thank God that I have crossed the abyss.

"Come to us, darling! Pliny says he will call to-morrow evening to see if you will ride out with him next day. Don't disappoint us. Give a world of love to Mary and the children.

Your affectionate GRACE."

This bright note communicated only pain to me;—great pain. How could she be so joyous if love was not the sun of her heaven? How could she rejoice that she had been separated from one whom she had loved so utterly? Yes! the selfish tears dropt upon the paper as I held it—they dropt fast as I knelt and prayed for self-renunciation.

It was my destiny to leave my sheltering home, and go to them. I had no excuse to offer. Would not God grant me strength and love through the coming hours? Would he not sustain me when sudden blows smote my heart, and I had no power to turn away? I must prepare to meet, with tranquil, smiling face, the deepest pangs I had ever known. Alas! one year had not glided on without deepening the feelings I had struggled against.

I told Cousin Mary I was going to Blooming Hill next day. She was delighted, and suggested many little attentions my wardrobe needed. I devoted myself to these little duties with a sort of anguish. What difference did it make how I should look? I felt grateful that I could conceal my feelings under a light manner, when there existed a strong necessity that I should do so. It is comparatively easy to disguise mental pain, when others do not suspect that it exists.

Evening drew near. "Shall I read to you, Kate?" inquired Mr. Bedell, going in the parlor to sit by the solar lamp. "I bought Hyperion to-day; that is a favorite of yours, I believe."

"Yes," I answered. "I should like to hear you read from it." I took my sewing and sat down near him. He was a fine reader. He often stopped to make remarks—I did also: one time I was replying to his observations, and carefully turning down a hem at the same time: as I looked up, he dropped his eyes; he had never looked at me so before, and I was struck with intense embarrassment. This confusion emboldened him, and he took my hand. At this instant the door opened and Mr. Cardover was ushered in by Mary McConkey. He evidently saw that his presence was inopportune; he hesitated, but we both exclaimed, "Come in!"

I added, "How are they all at Blooming Hill?"

"Quite well!" he answered, as he took the chair James offered him. "My sister desired me to call this evening to see if you would ride out to see them in the morning."

"Yes. I was expecting to. Grace wrote that I must be ready to accompany you to-morrow morning." A solemn silence ensued after Mr. Cardover had bowed to my remark.

"Have you ever read Hyperion, Mr. Cardover?" asked James, endeavoring not to appear embarrassed, and apparently not thinking exactly what he was saying. He had mentioned to me, as we sat down to read, that the book had been recommended to him by Mr. Cardover.

"I have read it!" was the response, as gravely made as if this fact had not occurred.

Cousin Mary fortunately came in at this moment, and in her innocent unconsciousness she entered into a list of animated questions about Grace that set us quite at ease; then she left us to ourselves again, but as her presence glided from the room, a sort of restraint glided in.

Mr. Cardover did not stay long; he left, promising to call for me in the morning.

I went with him to the door, and as I closed it, I exclaimed, "Good night, James!"

Then I turned and went up stairs: James did not reply; as I passed the door, I was conscious that he still sat by the table, although I did not look in. I felt as though my words fell like ice upon him, but I saw no reason why any conversation should pass between us. I was in a tumult of painful surprise inwardly: it grieved me that our frank, kind friendship could exist no longer: I learned how much I had valued it.

Now, I saw clearly how James's regard for me had been of gradual growth—I had known it, but I had supposed it was merely a fraternal affection—I had supposed Grace's image still slept in his remembrance. I had tried to interest and amuse him to divert his mind from his disappointment, and as I saw his cheerfulness returning, I had rejoiced in it. Once or twice he had frankly spoken of his attachment to Grace. I had seen so little of life, that I had believed first love could not be conquered under a great many years. The bubble was being rapidly broken under my very eyes by more than one friend.

I remembered that a few days before, James had asked me in a tone that now struck me as peculiar, if I thought I should like to live at the South. I had cordially answered, "Oh yes, I should like to for a while, not for ever."

It was his design to remove to a southern city as a chemist. He had not yet fixed on a time for his departure. It was a relief to know that he would soon be far distant from us, and yet a pain, for he had been so unceasingly kind to me, so ready to cheer me, if heavy shadows chanced to come over my soul.

An uncomfortable night passed away, and the morning, bright and exultant, broke into my chamber. How I dreaded the day, and many coming days! To go from that quiet

house, seemed to me almost as sorrowful as the departure of Eve from Paradise: she went from bliss to suffering, I from calm life and tranquil duties to conflict and anguish, which must be hidden under dissimulation!—it was this necessity of concealment, this force of circumstances, that excluded me from seeking sympathy, that made me doubly miserable. The stricken mourner may listen to words of strength, may be sustained by loving arms; but the secret mourner must put on no weeds, must cling to no human arm.

I went to the window, and looked out upon the sunshine—the azure heaven was peaceful as the blue eyes of an infant. Our little yard had never seemed so dear, so beautiful; the grape-vine clung in rich luxuriance to the trellis, the crab-apple tree and cherry tree were full of green foliage—the flower beds, occupying the only sunny spot, were blossoming and precious from the care bestowed upon them. These things I should not have heeded, if I were not going to leave them—they seemed to assure me that I should tread a thorny path ere I should see them again. I shrank from the woe of life—from the particular woe which had been accorded to me. I could have borne it, if fate had carried me far away from the objects who would unwittingly give me pain. But what good could it do to think?—I must work while I could. After dressing, I packed up a few articles, put my room in order, and then sat down to read the Bible; one verse struck my heart as peculiarly applicable. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Had I not forgotten lately that I had a holy mission upon earth? It was very simple, very clear, very beautiful! It was "to sow beside all waters." It was to learn how I might live in the radiance of the King Eternal, and how I might help every human being with whom I came in contact to live in this beautiful radiance also,—clouds and darkness were between me and the Divine One, always had

been, and only sorrow could remove them rapidly, and clear the path that leads to Him who is the origin of rest and beauty. It was a mistake to allow the wind and clouds of the present, to shut from my view the grand end which I must labor for. Somewhat consoled, somewhat more hopeful, I knelt and entreated for power to take the sorrows and cares of life with a grateful spirit—I implored strength to walk in my own path with content—implored the All-Merciful to lead me in *His* way to the beautiful destiny which He reserves for his beloved.

I went down to breakfast. When I left the dining-room to go up stairs, James took his hat and left the room also. We were in the hall together.

"Good-bye, James," I said, extending my hand. "You have always been so kind to me!"

"And yet —" he said, looking directly at me; his countenance was pale, and he closed his firm lips together lest he should not finish the sentence steadily.

"And yet —" I repeated: tears gathered, and I bowed my face, and kissed the hand that held mine humbly: "and yet, good-bye—for ever."

"Good-bye, *dear* Kate!" he pressed my hand, looked at me with an expression that smote me to the heart, although there was only yearning love and sorrow in it, and then he was gone. Oh! how I longed to tell him how I loved him with a sister's love! how I longed to bless him for the manly spirit in which he received my refusal—it could be called by no other name. How I yearned to cheer him, to offer noble fountains for the broken cisterns he had found. But it could not be.

In the course of two or three hours, Mr. Cardover came for me. I heard his rap, and listened at the head of the stairs to hear if any one went to the door. Presently I saw Miss McConkey walking through the hall, rubbing her face

clean with the skirt of her dress, and spatting her hair smooth with both hands.

"How do you do, sir? Walk in if you please!" she exclaimed with an extraordinary effort at politeness as she opened the door. I'll call Miss Kate."

She came running up after me, and stood looking at every article I put on, as if my apparel were royal.

"O, but aint that a pretty bonnet, though!" she uttered, "and them gloves, don't they fit nicely?"

"Yes, very nicely! Are you going to be a good girl while I am gone, Mary?" I observed as I put on my mantilla.

"Yes, ma'am! Did you make that mantilla, or buy it?"

"I made it. Good-bye!"

I hastened down stairs, and found Mr. Cardover ready to conduct me to the carriage. After we were fairly seated, and had nodded and smiled a last adieu to cousin Mary and the children, I saw Mary McConkey's grave face behind them; a parting word to her had been forgotten.

"Good bye, Mary McConkey!" I cried; "I'll tell Miss Grace what a good girl you've been since she has been gone."

Her face brightened all over, as she smiled and nodded.

Mr. Cardover kept up a running conversation upon newspaper topics, but it seemed to me to be carried on with effort on both sides. After a little silence he said, "James will go South very soon."

"Yes," I briefly responded, coloring at the recollection of the previous evening. I added, "I have not heard him say what day he intends to leave."

"You have not?" Mr. Cardover asked, looking at me searchingly, as if he doubted me almost.

"No, I have not," I answered; "do you know?"

"I saw him this morning; he thought he should leave

day after to-morrow." Still the dark eyes were reading my face, and under their scrutiny I could not look quite calm.

"Probably James decided the day this morning," Mr. Cardover said, half inquiringly; finding I made no response, he continued, "probably he will come to Blooming Hill to-morrow to bid his friends farewell."

"Did he say so?" I quickly asked.

"No; and I forgot to ask him. Would he go South without seeing *you* again?" This was asked in a low voice: we must not converse in low, confidential tones; it was such friendly tones that had undone me.

"He will, I think, go South without seeing me," I answered, rattling my fan a little, to encourage myself.

"James is a noble young man." The gaze was still riveted upon me, as if it would reach the secrets of my soul.

"Yes, I think so."

"He has not many external graces; but you, Kate, would care for the real man."

"I suppose I ought."

"And you do not?"

I was silent.

"You do not care for James?"

My heart was trembling lest I should not seem calm and strong—lest in acknowledging that I did not love James, some accent or expression might betray me—fear itself gave self-control, steadied my voice, and grasped pride for support.

"I do care for him," I said; "I love him as if he were a brother."

"A long silence ensued—then Mr. Cardover said, with his kind glance upon my face—it seemed so kind—"And you have been weeping this morning,—perhaps on account of his near departure?"

"I have been weeping for him." This was true, and I

was very glad it *was* the truth. "Now let us stop talking of this," I said coldly. Very soon we came in sight of the ocean. Mr. Cardover slacked rein—the view was glorious! It came like a fresh draught to my heart. There is an inspiring thrill in the dash of the rising tide—in the billowy freedom of old ocean.

"Oh, stop!" I entreated, unable to resist a thirsting desire to stand upon the beach, and gaze upon that vast expanse; it seemed to rebuke the hot rush of human passion. Mr. Cardover stopped the carriage, and I sprang from it ere he did so himself.

"I am going," I said, nodding, as I hastened to the beach. How beautiful was the earth!—it was rich in summer splendor; a late shower had flung down a mantle of brilliance over every thing; the trees, jewelled with sparkling drops, laughed in the sunshine; the grass was sweet and tender enough for the footfall of fairies; the music of bird and insect and waving foliage came to my ear,—but I hastened nearer to the sound of the ocean's anthem. I had need of it. I stood momently upon the beach, and the grandeur, not of ocean, but of life, came overwhelmingly upon me. What was the whole earth, but a material symbol of the glorious world of soul? Why did the ocean speak to me as the land could not? It was because beauty had faded from my inner world, and I implored strength, mighty as that of the sea, to sustain me—more sublime.

A rude mass of rock loomed up on the sandy beach. I climbed it, and looked upon a still wider view. The sky was lovely; a soft, ethereal drapery veiled half the heavens, its tender snow melting and sweeping through the blue. As I gazed, a poem of infinite, eternal beauty came to my soul;—at that instant I was able to give up the disposal of my life to the Great Creator—the Unerring Father. Yes, it seemed as if I even prayed under a new heaven—under a

clearer light—prayed that the confusion and unsightliness of my inner world might be moulded by the Divine Architect into a new grace and glory; faith in the beautiful and just arose; the strange splendor about me struck some deep, blessed chord of my being.

Mr. Cardover came up; he did not mount the rocks—he looked at me; I had no words to say, but a smile broke from my heart.

We gazed in a long silence.

But it was time to go; how reluctantly I turned—even as I turned, I had a consciousness that old feelings would take possession of me. Mr. Cardover came forward to assist me.

"No," I said, waving him away, "let me help myself."

He bowed silently, and we wended our way to the carriage, commenting for the first time upon the exceeding beauty of the scenery.

We started again. A little brown spire, surmounted by a golden cross, stood out in the noonday sky, showing us that we neared Blooming Hill; here and there a white or brown house peered out from a world of greenness. As we slowly drove along, we came in view of an old stone dwelling, built after a comparatively ancient fashion; it was partially covered with ivy: it brought old castles to mind, although its dimensions were not on an altogether magnificent scale. The grounds were well laid out; dark evergreens dotted them, contrasting with more airy, cheerful shrubbery.

"Who lives here?" I inquired.

"Mr. Waldron's parents live here; *he* also lives here in the summer. The village was named from this place. Blooming Hill can hardly be called a village, there are so few houses."

At this moment a lady and gentleman came cantering on spirited horses towards us. I soon recognized the dark rid-

ing dress, and white waving plume, as belonging to Grace. She came with a radiant face, her cheeks glowing, her eyes flashing with pleasure. We stopped a moment for gay greetings, and then they escorted us on our way. Mr. Cardover's brother was so totally unlike him. He was tall, lank and ungraceful; his pale shining red hair lay smoothly upon his head; it curled up in a regular line around his neck; he was very good-natured looking, with projecting upper teeth, which were frequently shown in smiles. He was very wealthy, and had obtained his riches by industry and happy fortune.

A short ride brought us to his house. It was a square white building with a piazza across the front, and wings on each side. Grape-vines ran over the lattice work of the piazza, and climbed to the roof of the house. Fruit trees abounded on the premises, but they were overshaded by magnificent oaks, elms and maples; roses were in their splendor, the air was redolent with fragrance; the summer-house was buried amid honey-suckle vines; comfort had been consulted every where.

Mr. Seth Cardover assisted Grace from her horse. Miss Cardover stood in the door to welcome us. Her cordial smiles added heart to her words; she took us into the parlors, untied my bonnet, begged Grace to throw off her riding costume as speedily as possible, and wondered that we had not literally melted.

"Why, we never thought of its being warm," said I, appealing to Mr. Cardover.

"Nor did we observe the heat, Miss Grace," said Mr. Seth Cardover, in a tone of peculiar meaning.

"Miss Cardover has mistaken the temperature!" exclaimed Grace, laughing.

When his brother had spoken, Pliny Cardover suddenly looked at him with a sort of inquiry, then he went to the

window, and gave a very low whistle. I fancied he was mentally saying, "Hey, is it so, brother Seth?"

I thought if brother Seth belonged to the class of gentlemen who are always on endearing and whispering terms with young ladies, I should come in for a share of his attentions. The dinner table deprived me of all hope: I saw that Grace was unpleasantly conscious of monopolizing the thoughts of our host.

Before we rose from the table he said, "Ladies, I am exceedingly sorry to be obliged to leave my home at this time, when it is made so attractive by your presence."

"How long shall you be absent, Seth?" asked his sister.

"About a week," he returned. "I shall depend on you, Pliny, to show the ladies about."

"I'll do my best," said Pliny. "What say you, ladies bright; will you have a boat row this afternoon? Shall we go down to the beach, and tempt old ocean?"

"Not to-day, Pliny," interrupted Miss Cardover; "let Kate get rested first. To-morrow afternoon we will prevail on Mr. Waldron and his sister to accompany us. Wouldn't that be more charming?" and she turned her cordial face to me.

"Yes, it will be delightful." I secretly wondered if Miss Cardover knew that Mr. Waldron had admired Grace.

"Come, little maids," said she, as she rose from the table, "let us go in the parlor, and sew and talk—you may take a nap if you choose." We declined this indulgence, and she continued: "If we can't get rid of Pliny, he may read to us. Would you like that?"

"Oh, yes," we answered.

Mr. Seth Cardover followed us to the parlor, and bade us "good-bye." His last glance rested on Grace; she dropped her pocket-handkerchief, and stooped to pick it up,

that she might avoid the farewell of those eyes. Miss Cardover and Pliny followed their brother to the door, where they stood and talked some moments.

"Too bad, isn't it?" said Grace, giving me a dismayed look.

"What?"

"Why, that Mr. Seth Cardover has taken a fancy to me. I did not feel quite certain of it until to-day, or I should have shortened my visit. I shall go before he returns. I have enjoyed myself so much; Miss Cardover is a delightful companion."

I ran up stairs to get my thimble; when I returned, Grace and Pliny Cardover stood in the window; the latter had his back turned towards me;—he was whispering to Grace, and her eyes were cast down: a timid, startled smile was on her lips, and a warm, beautiful blush was deepening in either cheek. She stole from the window, and sat down by Miss Cardover. I retreated a step, a suspicion flashed across me, that tore from my naked heart the disguises I had thrown over it. I knew every expression that came to the countenance of Grace, and I saw that a love-light from within had suddenly flashed out. She loved again. I did not tremble, or weep; and yet for an instant it seemed as if my soul had lost all support. "Fool!" I murmured, and I set foot upon the anguish that rolled towards me,—it must wait.

"What are you going to read?" I asked, as I went in, and took my seat.

"Here is a little poem by Mrs. Brooks, Kate. I'll read it, and see if you and Grace believe it." Mr. Cardover read.

"The bard has sung, God never formed a soul
Without its own peculiar mate to meet
Its wandering half, when ripe to crown the whole
Bright plan of bliss, most heavenly, most complete.

But thousand evil things there are that hate
To look on happiness; these hurt, impede,
And leagued with time, space, circumstance, and fate,
Keep kindred heart from heart, to pine, and pant, and bleed.

And as the dove to far Palmyra flying,
From where her native founts of Antioch beam,
Weary, exhausted, longing, panting, sighing,
Lights sadly at the desert's bitter stream;—

So many a soul o'er life's drear desert faring,
Love's pure congenial spring unfound, unquaffed,
Suffers, recoils, then thirsty and despairing
Of what it would, descends and sips the nearest draught."

The words of this poem sounded like a requiem over my youth and my joy. They defined vague thoughts; they said that thus should sweet prophesies of a glorious fate be trampled under the heel of destiny; ambition in various shapes had floated before me; often had I dreamed of modest sources of tranquillity,—*now*, I saw that the central hope had been slain, or had winged its flight away, and all lesser things had fallen to decay, even as the body becomes worthless when the spirit has departed. These thoughts preyed upon my spirit with a fearful power. I had reached the hour I had dreaded: all was perishing from my sight; the strength I had besought had gone with every treasure; courage had leaped from its throne; oh! to lay my face in the dust. And yet, a slow, steady fire gathered in my cheek, symbolizing the fire that was consuming my idols. I sat still and sewed, hearing with torture the conversation carried on by the happy hearts near me.

"And you really believe that two souls are created for each other?" asked Grace, looking at Miss Cardover with sweetly, modestly shining eyes. "Would not such a belief induce disturbance in society?"

"How so, Miss Grace?" questioned Mr. Cardover.

"Because mistakes are perpetually occurring. Two persons meet, and marry under the belief that they are made for each other. They are forced to change their belief in their congeniality, and find that they are painfully unlike in many respects that the heart holds most dear. If they believe your doctrine, they might feel themselves justified in separating from each other, in breaking up the family, and robbing their children of a hearth and home. In fact, we hear of such cases frequently."

"We never hear of such cases, except among those who have some radical wrong at heart,—except among those who hold in light esteem their sacred, plighted word, or are carried away by some enthusiasm that deprives reason of its just control. With our belief in this doctrine, we acknowledge that men and women cannot frequently avoid making mistakes in this world. We go to the altar, and swear before Almighty God to be faithful until death, and if there be no crime committed, by which the law can separate, it is perjury to break the bond. When persons marry, they take upon themselves a holy mission to each other, and virtually promise to give no wandering fancies to any passer by. If their hopes are broken, it is a sad destiny, yet it is a risk which has been run ever since the world has stood. A second mistake might occur, a third, a dozen. One has no right to marry, if he is not prepared to be "faithful unto death" under ordinary circumstances. Attachments are never formed after marriage without guilt, however platonic they may assume to be; for there is always an early time when the soul may start back from the precipice, and save its purity, ere it become too blind and infatuated. I have little patience with those who hold the legal tie of marriage in loose esteem; they have not the highest good of society at heart. They are not the self-sacrificing spirits who would

bleed in the cause of humanity,—they would rather dream on roses, than work out the problem of the world's redemption. There are those who are too superficial and sensual ever to be satisfied with one."

"And what would you do with such?" asked Grace. "Is their eternity spent with the chosen half?"

"If spent with the chosen half, certainly not in love,—such love as the blessed know. In one case, it would be a galling bondage, while in the other the reverse. If you observe married pairs, you will see that only those who are heavenly-hearted retain through life the first exquisite happiness of their union."

"But it seems a dreadful thing," said Grace, "that two should live together, and find no happiness in each other's society,—that they should almost despise each other, or that one noble spirit should be bound in chains to an inferior one, for a long period of years,—there are many such cases, where no gross wrongs exist."

"There are," said Miss Cardover; "but, Grace, children often have parents who are a grief and shame to them, and yet it will not release a child from certain duties; and parents often have children who stab them to the soul daily, yet a good parent for that reason will never cease to labor for the highest good of those whom God has given to his more peculiar care. 'The end is not yet;' we are in a school, and must expect to work amid difficulties, to aim in this life to secure our own highest spiritual development, and the best good of those around us, rather than to clutch happiness at the expense of holiest duty. Our faith in a world of compensation can buoy us up above every difficulty here. We are merely learning to live now, and the very woes that beset us, may become our best teachers. If the good and bad were not often mixed in closest affinity, the bad would lose opportunities of amendment, while perpetual sunshine to the good

would never deepen the virtues which spring from adversity. If those always met who were *peculiar mates* in this life, they might sail on the stream of content, and never reach that nobleness and worth which are tried in the crucible of suffering and contending fate. Until selfishness has been long warred against, we are not fit for perfect happiness,—we should grasp it, and shut our ears to the wailing cries that thronged the air. I know that many say, "they are good, while they are happy," which only means that they have never known themselves until evil overtook them. In an adverse hour, the giants start from their caves in the spirit;—amid the darkness and tempest, the heroic, the heaven-aspiring wrestle and conquer, while the supine are conquered, and confirm themselves in the belief that the giants never came, until the sun ceased to shine."

I could bear the flow of conversation no longer: as I rose, Mr. Cardover turned his large eyes upon me with a sudden, searching light, and instantly withdrew them.

"Where are you going, pet?" asked Miss Cardover, taking my hand, and looking at me with her frank, warm glance, which seemed always to love what it looked upon.

"You said we might take a nap," I returned; "so you will let me do that, or wander in the garden, won't you?"

"Yes, please yourself, my darling. Do just what you wish all the time you stay."

I left them: they were smiling: it seemed strange to me that they did not divine the pain that had rooted itself in my being so deeply. I hastened to the lovely room appointed for Grace and myself. How it would have charmed me with its snowy bed, pretty bureau, small pictures and fragrant bouquets, if the delicious hopes and romance of girlhood still belonged to me. I closed the door, and prostrated myself by the low bedside—there I remained in dumb humility—in poverty. I had no words—no winged

entreaties to send to the All-Father—no tears. It was all over, and a dead calm like that which the mariner grows faint at beholding on the Pacific, had overtaken me. Life is expiring in such a calm. The green vines at the window softly moved to the summer air; the birds tenderly twittered a hushed melody; it was mockery all, and yet as I listened I rose, took my sun-bonnet, and stole from the room. I left the house by a side-door, and wandered towards the dense woods that bounded the garden and meadow. Their solitude was what I wanted; on I went with hasty steps. I came to a tiny stream, that flashed and sparkled in the sudden sunshine that broke through a rift in the foliage of the trees—then it lost itself in a labyrinth of wild willows. I thought it might lead me to the ocean, and I followed its course. I came to the beach, to the vast sea. It had lost its glorious anthem of the morning; it chanted to me no more; it said now, "I sang to you when a little hope slept undreamed of beneath your courage—you cannot hear me—never more!" So I yielded to the message, and sat down upon a stone, burying my face in my hands. My soul prayed, "Oh, if God would let me always sit here, sit here until I die—this is a fate dreary enough. I am not strong enough to contend—to dissimulate—to meet them." Then it passed through my mind, that I had sometimes thought of going South as a governess. I had a long time ago spoken to Cousin Mary and Grace about it, and they had dissuaded me from my purpose. Now it must be done, and very speedily. A pale gray broke through the blackness of my despair as this relief came. I should be spared the torture of meeting them until I had learned to possess different feelings. With this thought I rose and started for the house.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Night came. Grace and I slept together; my head rested on her arm; she talked to me a long time in a sweet, rambling way that required little answer. I listened like one wearily imprisoned—stifled—panting for a place to breathe—to weep: for the dead calm was passing away. After she fell asleep I turned my face to the wall, and tears flowed, as my heart inwardly uttered,

"No dreams for me henceforth and for ever! No seducing brightness in the paths of earth—a terrible revelation has flashed through every hitherto hidden chamber of my being: no longer frank with others, I will speak to thee, my soul, and then weep in self-pity until my anguish is allayed. I love him, and through the midnight darkness the blush steals to my cheek as I acknowledge it: thus they deserve to suffer, who forget the delicacy of woman, and are won unwooed. And so over all the blasted hopes that have dropped from my tree of life, a mocking voice sounds, and yet at times I thought there was an unwonted kindness in his eyes when he turned to me—it was pity for my orphan estate and dependence. It seems some dreadful dream that holds me in thrall—some fearful magic that has changed my hopeful heart, and the whole universe with it. I could not help it. I suffer, because God permits it. I did not know

how strong and wild was the spell that was silently enwrapping me."

Thus moaning, the long night dragged along, and morning dawned. Grace awoke.

"Why, Kittie," she exclaimed, "you look as if you had scarcely slept at all."

"I think I am not well, Grace," I said, hoping to attribute my appearance to physical illness: in fact I was not well. "My head aches."

"Don't get up. Let me bathe your head in cold water. Oh! you poor little thing, you look as if you felt so ill." She rose, threw up the window near the bed, shook up my pillow, and then bathed my brow with her gentle, caressing touches. She kissed me, and spoke so tenderly. "We won't take our sail on the water to-day, if you are not well enough to go, dear."

"I shall get up presently," I returned; "this morning air is reviving."

She left the room, and ere long returned laden with roses and a host of sweet flowers. She lovingly laid the most fragrant roses on my pillow, and on the snowy counterpane: the rest she arranged in the vases: the brightest of all she placed on a little stand near the bed, where I could see it: then her gentle hands bathed my forehead again in cooling water. When she ceased, she stroked my hair slowly as she talked. Beloved Grace! her angelic tenderness kept somewhat more distant the sudden pangs of envy that had assailed me; her almost maternal manner soothed me. I looked at her as she moved about the room, and remembered that she had suffered as I was suffering. Could she have endured more? Yes, she was more cruelly situated. Judith had a heart of iron towards her; but she, my noble Grace, she would have knelt and offered up her happiness to the Infinite Giver, if duty demanded it. Her whole life

seemed to say, "I live for you Heaven—I yield me to my Father's guiding hand."

Could I be willing to take away her happiness? Should I allow any thing to stand between us? "Oh! my Father, spare me this!" I entreated. "Let me still feel that as destined angels we walk hand in hand through our different discipline. Let her still be the pure one who has led me upward. Save me from being ungrateful to her even in a transient thought; and some time, when I am better and holier, fill my soul with thankfulness for her joy—her beautiful joy."

"Grace, dear," I said, "I am going to leave my bower of roses, but I bless you for placing them there just the same. Now let me kiss you with all my heart, dear, kind sister."

She smilingly met my embrace, and then went down stairs.

In the afternoon we went on the ocean: a merry party we seemed in our sail-boat—ourselves with Mr. Waldron and his widowed sister. And none laughed more than I, or dashed about the spray more recklessly. Grace sat beside Mr. Cardover; she said little, and when in a more quiet mood I looked at her, a pang, an unconquerable pang struck my heart. Perhaps it was envy. It seemed as if a tender aura breathed around her—a soft angelic charm that waved above the buds of hope, springing momently to life within. I cannot express it, and yet the fluttering gladness of her exquisitely pure spirit was all comprehended by mine. It had upon me the effect of beauty, and yet it pained me—it awoke sweet visions of a capability for joy, with the knowledge that I must be for ever shut out from such a paradise. Mr. Cardover glanced at her often, and then hastily averted his eyes. I imagined the same sorrowful pain came across Mr. Waldron's heart that came to mine, but he sat next me and I dared not look at him. After we reached home, I went

into the parlor suddenly, and saw Mr. Cardover bending over the back of Grace's chair, speaking to her in a low tone—the same sweet, bashful look was in her eyes, and the same warm blush glowed in her cheeks.

The next day we were invited to visit at Mr. Waldron's. His sister, Mrs. Ingersoll, rode over in the morning, and proposed it. She was the same pale, elegant-looking woman who had entered the church with her brother, the first time I saw them.

It was a beautiful day, and we preferred walking to riding. While we sat at work, wondering if it was time to get ready, Mr. Waldron and Mr. Cardover entered. They had met at the post-office, and the former walked home with Pliny to accompany us to his house.

"There is a letter," said Mr. Cardover, holding one high above his head, and laughing at our eager looks.

"Here, Miss Kate!"

I looked at it, but it was for Grace; it had on it a foreign post-mark. I recognized Mr. Benzoni's handwriting.

"From Italy, Grace!" I said, in surprise, as I handed it to her.

"From Walter, I imagine," exclaimed Mr. Cardover "Devour it quickly, lady-birds, and then we will go out in this delicious air."

Grace's eyes fell on the superscription, and every vestige of color left her face. She looked at it as if she were spell-bound.

"Come," she said in a low voice, and I followed her to our room. As I passed Mr. Waldron, there was a pale anxiety in his face; his eyes were riveted upon Grace with an expression that assured me her every heart-beat was a study for him.

Grace flung the letter on the floor, and casting herself in

a chair, buried her face in her hands, and gave way to passionate weeping.

"Grace," I said, after a long silence, "why should this affect you so? You love him no longer."

"No! oh no! it brought up all the past. Every feeling rushed over me—it came like a cruel signal to remind me of the slight hold I once had upon happiness—it recalled the skeleton ever sitting at the Egyptian banquet. And Kate, I will confess it, however inconsistent it may seem, that wild, intense love rushed over me like a torrent. But it is gone! Oh! that I were sheltered; were safe in a holier love. I fear that man, although I love him no longer; he once swayed my whole soul."

"He is married, Grace."

"Oh no, he would not write to me if Judith were living. She must be dead, and he has written perhaps that he is free now. Perhaps it would be better for me to send the letter back unopened; shall I, Kate?"

"If it were mine, I should read it. I never could see any particular sense in sending back an unopened letter. It might have a totally different bearing from what was supposed. You can send it back without reply, or if you do not like this, you can send a second one back unbroken."

She broke the seal, and after reading it, gave it to me with firm lips and flashing eyes, saying, "Read it, and tell me what you think." I read:—

"Beloved Grace,—Do not start, heavenly one, when this familiar writing falls beneath your eyes—it comes from one who has gleaned in his wanderings only ashes to satisfy his heart—from one who looks back with inextinguishable yearning for the peace that was about his steps, when the angel of his life sat beside him. *You* were and are that angel—you, and you alone have power to draw me from a hell

of misery, and win me back to heaven. You used to talk of eternal repose. Grace! if I never taste of either temporary or eternal repose, it will be your hand that thrusts me back among fiends. I am a reckless man—my destiny hangs upon a thread. I am hopeless, unless hope comes from you. I have not the will or the strength to take an upward path without your help. I have lost faith in man and woman. I trust you! I turn to you, and read love and mercy in your soft eyes. In my miserable loneliness I pray to you as to some white-robed angel, who will fold my sinking head upon her breast, and bear me up to Heaven. Forgive the past! I was deluded by a siren—I was wiled away from you, and from my better self at the same time. I have no excuse to offer, except that I was mad—infatuated. I have expiated that infatuation. I have repented with groans and tears—I have seen every hope blasted. My proud soul has bowed itself in the dust. Judith was unfaithful to me! Never before have those words escaped my lips, and never shall the world know my shame. She lives at Rome caressed and honored, the pitied, abandoned wife of Benzoni. She walks with care and prudence as yet, but her motions are watched, and ere long she will forget herself, and sin privately, while publicly winning the respect due to virtue. I shall never cease to watch her for my child's sake. My child! oh, Grace, would to God she inherited your angelic nature;—would to God I had never seen her mother, then might we both have been spared bitter agony. You have suffered—you have not forgotten me. You cannot! You love me still!—the wild, unconquerable love that springs to you at each instant of my life, kindles the same fervent glow within the heart that long since learned to respond to mine. Do not deceive yourself—do not turn away and think your being is divorced from mine. I hold you by a bond that can never be broken; a love that will seek you

until death, for you are mine, Grace, mine alone, and neither God nor the Evil One shall divide us now. Forgive this raving, angelic one. I will kneel at your feet, and beseech in more tender terms, but I cannot give you up. You can scarcely comprehend my passionate Italian nature. I live, I breathe but for you. All has been swept away, but one stake is left. I win you—or die! Every hope, every fear, every thought, every feeling is concentrated upon the prize I seek—valued pricelessly, since the world holds none other for me. My angel! I hear you reason, and say it would be wrong to bless me while Judith lives, or while we are undivorced by law. You acknowledge that it is for eternity, not time that you live—for God's sanction, and not the world's praise or blame. Look within your heart, Grace, and ask where the wrong would be. Would it not be committing far more sin to drive me, a reckless, ruined wretch, upon the dangerous quicksands of temptation, than to guard me with your holiness and purity? I cannot progress unless I am happy—unless my affections are at rest. Why should human happiness be sacrificed to existing laws? Why should I be chained to Judith, when she preys like a vulture upon the vitals of my happiness? Why should *we* be parted, when it would be exquisite happiness for us to be together? (I assume that you love me still, Grace.) God desires man to be happy. The eyes of the law are more terrible to you than the strong cry of a breaking heart. This world was not destined by the Creator to be the prison-house of souls—it has been made so by the sins of mankind. The sin of living a married life without love, has crushed thousands of spirits—it is living a lie. It proceeds from a cowardice that dare not brave the world; brave creatures weak and mortal as themselves. You, Grace, I believe have a heroism that may elevate you above such. I feel a pure and holy love for you, and am sure that our union would promote our welfare

spiritually. It would be criminal and impure for me to seek any other, while my inner life cleaves to you. Let us rather cast off all bonds, all systems of doctrine, and trust only in the God who cares for our happiness. I have thought much upon this subject, and am convinced that I have the truth—sure that it would be right for us to live together. Can you be unforgiving, Grace? My whole life shall be devoted to your happiness. In placid, perfect content our lives shall pass. Your benevolent nature shall know no check until my fortune is exhausted in your service. We will prove to the world that goodness, purity and right may exist where persons are not bound by the mere figment of a ceremony, which differs with every nation. I shall wait for your reply with intense impatience. Think well and deeply on this matter. If a favorable answer come, I shall fly to meet you, to bear you to any spot on earth you choose. Think of me, beloved, for not a thought shall wander momently from you. Angel, give me hope, or I am lost, lost for time and eternity. I will not *live* if you turn from my prayers. Mark me, Grace, I have said there was but one stake left; if that is lost, you send an unprepared soul to judgment. If gained, I shall become good and happy—devoted to my race. Farewell.

"GIOVANNI."

I looked at Grace in utter astonishment. How little he had understood her. The fire had left her eyes, her hands were clasped on her lap, and tears were dropping—dropping.

"Grace, what do you think of the letter?" I asked. "What do you think of his views?"

"They are false and delusive, yet I am not surprised that he entertains them. Kate, there is no vital centre of holiness in him to keep him right—to make him wise. He must be so wretched, so lonely, so unhappy. I thought it was only my happiness that Judith sacrificed."

"Shall you return his letter?"

"Perhaps I could say something to make him think life still worth living for—something that might awake some slumbering good within him, and give him courage."

"You are always so sanguine, Grace. It is a blessed thing to be so; but a case like this is different. I would not tamper with danger here—*you* are safe enough, but his hope must be crushed entirely. Do not open the door to pity. Send back the letter without a word."

"But, Kate, he says he will not live if"—

"Yes, I know he says so, and a great many healthy men have said the same thing before him."

"But you know his passionate disposition, Kate. Suppose he should—should—you know, Kate, Miss Cardover was telling us this morning about that German gentleman who committed suicide when her friend refused him."

"Yes, but I have no fears of Mr. Benzoni. Perhaps I could write him a note that would change his fell intent."

"What would you say?"

"DEAREST MR. BENZONI,—My cousin, Miss Percival, is rather pleased with another gentleman at present. She remarked to me this morning that she thought if you *would* kill yourself, it might save her considerable annoyance.

"Yours, with much esteem,

"K. H."

The color spread suddenly over the face and neck of Grace.

"Did you guess that I loved some one else?" she asked in a startled manner.

"I guessed it," I replied, rising and going to the looking-glass to brush my hair.

"How? Did my manner shew it? I have tried to seem indifferent, for he has not *said* yet that he loved me."

I did not answer: the wildest flood of emotion rushed over me; it rose higher and higher: it seemed as if my heart would burst. I knew the joy that was swaying the soul of Grace. She sat buried in delicious thought. At length she said, "Did you guess, Kate, that he loved me?"

"Yes, I guessed so."

I caught sight of her radiant face in the glass; and then saw my own, filled with contending feelings. Grace came to me, and kissed my quivering lips.

"I thought you would rejoice in the knowledge that we loved each other, Kate."

It was too late; my self-control was gone. I flung my arms about her, and wept in an agony of passion. I cared not that the flood-gates had given way. What had one so hopeless and forsaken to do with pride?

"I will not always be so selfish, Grace. I shall learn to look upon your happiness as I ought. But forgive me now! Have mercy on me for awhile. Do not speak to me about it!"

"No, I will not, poor Kittie!"

There was a rap at the door; it was only the servant, who said Miss Cardover and the gentlemen would be ready to go whenever we were. Grace had not turned to go to the door before I regretted intensely that I had betrayed myself. I would have given worlds to recall those tears.

"I had no idea, Kate, that you would feel so badly about it," she said, returning. "Sister Mary cried just as hard, when I told her that I was engaged to Mr. Benzoni. This is more uncertain than that seemed. We shall not be separated far; we can see each other every day."

I breathed freely; she did not suspect the truth. I was almost happy, or rather I was deeply grateful. We

bathed our faces, and went down stairs like veiled nuns. Grace complained that the sun was so scorching without a veil, when Miss Cardover asked if we designed to enter a convent, and had been shriving each other of our sins for the last hour.

"And have you been talking about Walter's letter all this time?" she continued, looking at Grace, whose countenance had regained its usual composure; her eyes showed no traces of tears through her veil.

"Not all the time!" answered Grace. "The letter was not from Walter!" she added in an undertone. Mr. Waldron's ear caught her words,—he looked upon her with eyes of love, and read in her now calm face, traces of past emotion. We started from the house. I stepped back from Mr. Cardover, who chanced to be next me. He and Grace walked together, while I went between Mr. Waldron and Miss Cardover. I felt as if protected by two good angels.

"Did you know, Kate," said Miss Cardover, as we fell a little behind the couple in front, "that Mr. Benzoni was in the country?"

"No! how can it be?" I exclaimed in surprise.

"He is here. Did you know him, Mr. Waldron?" and Miss Cardover looked at him.

"I have met him."

"I received a letter from Lilly to-day, saying she had seen him. Grace does not know it, of course."

"Oh no!" I answered.

"I think our Grace was reserved for a happier fate than his wife might expect," Miss Cardover said. Mr. Waldron colored, but did not return the look or smile of Miss Cardover: she went on. "Lilly says that he stopped Gertrude in the street and asked a great many questions about Grace. I wonder if Judith is with him. He probably regrets his conduct."

"I should think he ought!" I said. I concluded not to

ll Grace at present that he was in America, and said, "Suppose we do not mention it. I hope they may not meet."

"Why keep it from her?" asked Mr. Waldron.

"I merely thought," I said, "that it might annoy her, nd that it would be as well for her not to know it, until she oes back to Boston at least."

"I would not make a secret of it, Miss Kate. What is e to her now? only a despised acquaintance!"

"Perhaps I had better tell her.—I'll do so," I rejoined. scanned my reluctance to telling her, and found my motives ery confused. True, I thought it would perplex her, and estroy her pleasure; but my strongest reason for silence as, that it might detain her at Blooming Hill longer, and ubject me to the misery of seeing her and Mr. Cardover toether. I panted for freedom, and wanted to be alone duing the long, long night that I might pray and weep unseen. he strain upon my heart seemed hourly more than I could ear. I strove to act towards Mr. Cardover precisely as I ad formerly done, and yet I found myself involuntarily hunning his presence whenever it was possible. Often ome bitter word replied to the kind ones he addressed me, nd then I trembled lest that bitterness should betray the onflict within.

It was so beautiful and pleasant in Mr. Waldron's home; ot luxurious, but suggestive of all the means of enjoyment hat lie about human beings,—and yet it seemed so sad to eel that what might once have awakened the liveliest pleaure, now seems idlest nothingness to the craving heart. Mr. Waldron's mother sat by the window when we entered, her oft, hazel eyes beaming welcome,—her face was so filled with benevolence and intelligence, that I could scarcely feel ow old she was,—how long her heart had beaten amid the oys and sorrows of life. It seemed as if she must have known all the pains that meet us, as we walk the weary way

of existence. I sat beside her, and as she talked with me, the sweet, holy calmness of her spirit breathed over me like a perfume. Her husband was older than herself, and perfectly childish. It was a pleasure to note the quiet solicitude which Mrs. Ingersoll and Mr. Waldron showed for his wants and whims. We went to the library, and were examining various curiosities; every thing which Mr. Waldron took down from the cabinet shelves to show us, his father took from his hand and first examined, then gave back with a satisfied look. There were many paintings in various rooms in the house, which Mrs. Ingersoll showed us, according to Miss Cardover's desire. Before every one, the old man stood a few minutes, then retired back until his son expressed some opinion of another, when he took his stand before it. Mrs. Ingersoll smiled, and said, "Father enjoys this so much, it is a cheap way to make him happy."

"I often wish from my heart," replied Miss Cardover, "that some of the flatteries given to the young and fair, could be transferred to the old."

"Hey?" inquired old Mr. Waldron.

"I am so pleased that you enjoy these paintings so much," said Miss Cardover.

The old gentleman looked greatly pleased, and said we must go into Horace's study. He led the way, and we followed. It was a room on the second floor; a dim, religious light pervaded it. Retreating sunshine came from the west, through two large windows draped with heavy damask curtains. An arm chair stood within the embrasure of one window, and upon it lay an open book. Upon the wall, nearly opposite this inviting seat, hung an oil painting that arrested my attention instantly. It was a female face. Mrs. Ingersoll said it was called "Hope." It bore a striking resemblance to Grace, although the golden hair was unlike, and also the blue eyes,—the face was full of etherial, angelic

sweetness. None remarked the likeness, although I fancied all saw it. Grace looked at it a few moments, and then turned to another painting. She glanced at it across the room with wistful eyes, and deepening color; turning, she met the earnest gaze of Mr. Waldron. She blushed yet more deeply, with a conscious look, which I am sure she was sorry to betray.

We came home in the summer twilight. I had been writing in our chamber half an hour, when Grace came in with her bonnet on, half breathless. "Where have you been?" I inquired.

"Why, I forgot to send that letter back to Italy, before we started. I have been to the post-office with it."

I told her of Mr Benzoni's return.

CHAPTER XIX.

Thoughts of Horace Waldron.

"Aug. 19th.—It is a moonless night; long since the twilight has faded; long since the household has become noiseless. Quiet souls are walking in dream land, while I wake and dream, and look around my study, as if I could still see the presence that filled it to-day;—the presence that fills every place I seek. I hope, and yet I fear. I dream that her spirit recognizes every pulsation of my own, and bounds to meet me when I walk in woodland or by the sea, and read suggestions of herself in every thing that is beautiful. I dream that she listens, and catches the thoughts that spring to her, winged with love powerful, as it is pure. If I were sure that she loved me, then *could* I believe that spirit reached unto spirit, and held communion. Even though she turned willingly from me, and I went away, I have not been able to believe that she would have done so, had she known my innermost soul, as it stands revealed before God. She was painfully pre-occupied; had I known her history then, I should not have sought her until the tempest had swept by. It has passed; leaving her free, enriching, rather than impoverishing her being. I was strangely struck by an incident that occurred after I had walked home with her to-

day; with her and Miss Cardover together, for I scarcely dare walk with her alone, lest I am not wholly welcome. I went to the post-office, and entered the inner room, where I stood talking with the postmaster on some business. A letter was handed in from the outside. The clerk took it up and read the direction, 'Giovanni Benzoni,' then threw it into the box where it belonged. I thought of Grace, for they were light footsteps that had tripped in, and the color of the glove upon the small hand that thrust through the letter, was precisely like hers. I went out. It *was* Grace! She almost ran, for it was getting dark. I paused a moment, then followed her. I knew, I know still that she must have had some innocent motive for communicating with him, yet it struck a dagger to my hopes. Mayhap his wife has died, and he seeks her again. She is so exquisitely pure I cannot believe her spotless heart turns to him; an angel could not link the sweetest affections to a spirit of evil—in her hopeful innocence she has thought to do him some good. Beautiful Grace, it is here that you need my care, and love, and more worldly wisdom, and I have need of your ardent, guileless impulses. I sometimes look around this old home of my father's, and dream of the change that would come over its aspect, if it were glorified with the constant presence of my beloved—my wife—so I call her, so I yearn to call her throughout all eternity—in the fervor of my solitary thoughts I cannot even think of our destiny as a separate one. A holy and beautiful revelation of womanhood she has been to me—through her a glory has shone upon me, penetrating into every lost retreat, as lights suddenly change a dark cave into a temple rich in arabesques, columned aisles, and fretted ceilings flashing with gems set in waving silver. I look with intensest longing upon her lovely face and form, which are to me so suggestive of richer, more heavenly life —I look, hoping to read in her countenance her soul's

full response to mine. At times I think I catch the answer; the electric chain draws her near me, thrilling me with the conviction that we shall part no more for ever; again I see in her manner an absence of interest, and a dread falls upon me lest I have taken the graceful embarrassment which every modest woman feels upon an undesigned show of love from one of our sex, for more than it warrants. Upon my inward world, she has risen as the first Eve arose, an exponent of that mystic beauty and bliss which the soul thirsts after. If I should lose her, I shall still believe that God placed in her white hand the key that has opened the noblest depths of my being: I shall strive to bear the burden of life as one not unworthy the holy love she has awakened.

"*Aug.* 20.—Hope is gone! It was a fancy that she came to my heart."

CHAPTER XX.

We sat in the summer-house and sewed, while Grace read to us "The Ancient Mariner." Suddenly Mr. Seth Cardover appeared in our midst with Lilly, whom he had brought from the city; beautiful, bewitching Lilly—all met her with kisses and sunny smiles: my heart clung to her in her bright innocence. Pliny Cardover followed his brother. Lilly bounded away from us, and went wandering towards the garden: I went after her under the pretext of keeping her out of mischief. We strolled about hand in hand, gathering blossoms and berries; we sat down under a favorite oak tree, and I told her stories, weaving in the mystic and pure, until within her eyes there grew a wistful look, precursor of the earnest gaze she would yet cast upon existence.

When the sun threw soft, lengthened shadows upon the grass, I said, "Shall we go to the post-office, Lilly, to see if there are any letters? I would like to walk."

Lilly agreed to the proposition, and we hastened to the house to get ready. I had written an advertisement that I wished to forward to the city in reference to a situation as governess. I had consented to Miss Cardover's urgent solicitation to remain with her a few days after Grace left. I was glad of the opportunity of being separated from Grace. I hoped in the mean time to gain a more heavenly spirit of self-renunciation—to learn to love without expecting a great

return. I wished also to write to the family that my purpose was fixed to go South; I wanted the surprise over by the time I went home. So Lilly and I went to the post-office, and I deposited my document, obtaining a few letters and papers in return.

As we neared the gate, on our way home, Pliny Cardover came to meet us; he did not look pleased. "I was requested to ascertain your whereabouts, Lilly!" he exclaimed. "Tea is ready, Miss Kate."

"Grace is going to-morrow," said Mr. Cardover, more amiably, as he took Lilly's disengaged hand. "My sister will not give you up yet."

"She expects me to stay," I answered.

"Grace is going to leave with me in the morning. You will miss her."

"Yes." I thought he intended to give me an opportunity of conversing frankly about his attachment to her, but I did not desire any confidences. I added, "You have now the promise of a beautiful day."

"Yes, we shall have a charming drive. You are less social than Grace, Miss Kate. Does the world of nature excel the world that is in human souls?"

"Oh no," I replied, "but I am always enchanted to get in the country. You forget that I have been shut up among brick walls a great while. We ladies are with each other all day, when the sun shines hotly, but about this time it is so pleasant for rambling I can hardly resist it. I think the others do not always care about going with me."

"Business will detain me in the city all the time now for a month; our fall trade is beginning. But I will come out any day to drive you home, if you will send me a line."

"Thank you."

"Will you send me a line?"

"I would like to go in the cars for a change, so I will not trouble you."

"Very well," he replied briefly. We walked on in silence.

During the evening I took good care not to absent myself. Grace was up stairs packing her trunk. It was late when I went to her. Every thing was ready for an early departure in the morning, but Grace looked sad and distressed.

"I have evil forebodings, Kate," she said, as I took a seat and laid my hand on the little Bible we were in the habit of reading together, before going to bed.

"Why evil forebodings?" I asked.

"I have seen Mr. Benzoni to-night!"

"Where?"

"In the summer-house. Immediately after tea I came up stairs to pack. I missed something, and remembered I must have left it in the summer-house this afternoon. It was not dark, and I hastened to find it. I met Mr. Benzoni in the door. It was like an apparition—he caught me in his arms and drew me within, before I could recover from my surprise. Then he released me, and fell at my feet, pouring out a torrent of passionate words.

"'Let me go!' I said, for he held my dress.

"'Not until you have listened to me,' he returned. 'A good angel sent you to me the moment I arrived. I saw your steps were bent here, and I came in at the other door. I could not wait your answer to my letter; I came over in the same vessel.'

"'It was an idle errand. I sent back your letter without reply. Now, leave me!' I said, rising, for I had at first sunk upon a seat.

"'This is affectation!' he answered, letting go his hold, but standing so near that I could not escape.

"'It is truth that I value you for what you are,' I replied. 'I loved you once, for what you were not. I should shudder to be what you would have me, even if I loved you. I would have died rather than have degraded my soul by accepting your specious reasoning as truth.'

"'Grace, the world is changing fast,' he said, as if already prepared for resistance. 'I do not ask you to do wrong. There is no law for love. I know your constant heart; you are incapable of change; you love me still. The purest women that ever breathed, the most intellectual, have found no sin in free love—they rather find a deadly wrong in marriage without love.'

"I attempted to spring past him, but he caught my arm, and detained me, saying, 'Forgive me, dear Grace. Think of the past, think of the hours when your head rested upon my shoulder—when you told me all your pure thoughts. I have sinned and sorrowed since then. I have come back a better man.'

"'Then manifest it by not restraining my liberty.'

"'Life or death, Grace?'

"'Death, if sin and life go together!' I spoke with an angry energy that convinced him of my earnestness. He struck his forehead, and dropped into a seat, trembling. I could not help pitying him. Kate, that proud man wept as I never saw a man weep. I stood and looked at him, rivetted to the spot with a compassion so powerful that I could not turn away. He, whom I once loved so deeply—to see the wreck he was. Blasted hopes and bitter memories making up his life—no golden, eternal future to cheer him onward.

"'I wish you were less unhappy,' I said, as he bowed his head upon his clasped hands. I besought him with words I cannot remember now, still to have faith in God, and in his own capabilities for goodness and happiness. I told him that I forgave him freely. After a pause he asked,

"'If I were divorced, Grace, would you marry me?'

"I trembled under his fiery, determined glance, but I answered, 'I would not, Giovanni, I have ceased to love you.'

"His gaze rivetted itself upon me, as if he would win back the power he once possessed over me; I looked towards the house and felt his grasp again upon the sleeve of my dress.

"'You love some one else?' he inquired, slowly.

"I did not answer, but felt that a tide of crimson swept up to my brow. He rose to his feet with a curse that startled me—a deep and dreadful malediction. I sprung from him and fled. But oh, Kate, that sudden tone, betraying a mine of wild passion within, haunts me like a prophecy of evil. I feel as if he had stepped in between me and happiness some way—I feel as if some great, dark shadow had fallen upon my joy. Do you believe, Kate, that when persons love each other, and intensely think of each other, they are in any way conscious of the state of mind, experienced by each?"

"I don't know," I answered, taking up the little Bible again.

"I believe it," said Grace, "or rather I fear it. Perhaps it is no presentiment; perhaps I am only looking at the future through a gloomy medium."

"Probably you are, Grace," I said. "I have often seen portentous shadows that amounted to nothing! More frequently I have had a presentiment of bright tidings that never came."

A night's repose served in some measure to restore the spirits of Grace. We had an early breakfast, and then in the cool, delicious morning, we assembled on the piazza to see our friends start. How handsome and suitable they looked as they bowed adieu from the carriage. Mr. Cardo-

ver carefully drew Grace's dress from the wheel, that it might not get soiled—this little action reminded me that she would always be shielded by his manly care and love. And so they rode away under the azure heavens, under the eastern sunlight, amid bird songs and exulting voices of nature —amid freshening dews and air-laden perfumes. Thus it ever is; some hearts laugh, while others weep I turned a compassionate look towards the far-distant stone house, almost hidden by foliage. There dwelt one heart that was telling the same pitiful strokes that mine was telling that jubilant summer morning.

Lilly asked as she danced in the house, "Will they ever be married, Aunt Lizzie?"

"Ask Kate," replied Miss Cardover, with a smiling look of inquiry at me, "I presume she knows more about it than I do, a great deal, Lilly."

"I don't know, Lilly," I answered, quickly.

"Well, if they should," pursued Lilly, dancing back to me, "wouldn't Miss Grace be my aunt?"

"Yes, Lilly."

"And if you should marry Uncle Seth, wouldn't you be my aunt, Miss Kate?"

"Oh, yes," I responded, with an involuntary smile, glancing at Uncle Seth with a "wouldn't I?"

"Yes, if such a thing *should* happen!" answered he with a slightly distressed look. I believe he had a fear that I might attack his affections. He took his hat and went away, while we went in the parlor.

"Oh, Kittie! what an entrancing morning! My heart sings a new song unto the Lord on such days as this. There springs up a well of joyousness within me. Let us sit in this eastern light; it pours through the vines and into the room so pleasantly." Thus spoke Miss Cardover, as we went into the room; her whole nature seemed to overflow

with youth, strength and exultation; it did me good. "How is it," I mentally asked, "that she can be so happy, so fresh, so delighted with life? How can her sunny, affectionate heart be content without the prospect of being beloved?—the realization of a dream of hope and joy to a noble nature?—the star of existence to some yearning heart? Only the world-hardened cease to crave holy love, and very pitiful it is to see the sweetest blossoms of romance and youth buried within an ossified heart."

"Life seems to satisfy you fully, Miss Cardover," I said, "it is spring-time in your soul all the time. I never find it so altogether with those of my own age, and yet I have always been taught to believe that youth was the halcyon time."

"It is a great mistake, my dear; it was intended that we should grow lovelier and happier every year, but the original intention of our Lord has been sadly marred by his misguided children. We begin life full of unlovely tendencies; after passing under the rod, we ought to lose some of them, and approach a little nearer Eden innocence and hope; if we do not, then have we never learned the object of our creation."

"But we grow old, and no one cares very much for us then—and then we die."

"Then we begin to *live*, if we have obeyed the divine command to love God and our neighbor."

"To *live?*" I said, thrilling under the hopes that had died out of my heart. "Yes, but there is a great gulf between *now* and *then*."

"You may begin to cross the gulf now. Worship in the true temple of to-day."

"I will try. Would you like to tell me your history, Miss Cardover?"

"There is not much to tell, Kate. I loved, and was

disappointed—I recovered from the blow, and thanked God that it had fallen."

"Why did you thank Him?"

"Because the anguish I suffered made me fly to Him; it developed my spiritual nature, and led me finally to recognize the myriad buds of hope that lay under the cold clay of worldliness: a celestial light and warmth streamed within, and like a sun-lit river flowed outward, and melted away all barriers—so then I stood transfigured, looking upon this beautiful world with a joy all unknown before, and I looked upon my brothers and sisters in the universe with an interest and enthusiasm altogether new. I desired that they should learn the blessed truths I saw—should learn that joy lay in the future if they would labor for it."

"Did you never love again?" I questioned, not quite understanding what the source of this joy was.

"No, I never did."

"You may still. You are comparatively young yet."

"I do not expect to until I enter that world where heart sees heart," she answered, smiling.

"Do you expect to be a beloved bride there?" I questioned, returning her smile.

"Yes."

"The bride of him you loved?"

"No."

"Was he unworthy of you?"

"Far from it. It was an attachment formed at school; we were engaged at fifteen. As we grew older I saw that I was not the one he would have chosen; I had an irritable, independent way some years ago that was not agreeable; I was somewhat affected—I was not always frank and kind—my soul did not shine forth transparently through my actions—I was restless, craving."

"How could you have been all that? and yet it is a joy

to me to hear you say so, for it gives me hope that I too may come forth serene and good some time. Did he leave you, or how did you part?"

"He never would have broken our childish bond himself: he was too delicate for that; I saw that he tried to love me, tried to be satisfied with me. When I became convinced of this, I gave him his freedom. That was many years ago, Kate. I remember the day so well; he was coming to take a ramble with me; this house of Seth's was new, and I was here making a visit. I had the room you have now, Kate; that afternoon I knelt in wild supplication for strength. He came, and we went in yonder woods—do you see them?"

"Yes!"

"There I told him our engagement must be broken, for a conviction had been growing upon me daily that we were unsuited to each other. I did not find in myself a consent to be his wife. His pale, handsome face flushed, and he took my hand, and bending over it, kissed it; when he looked at me again there were tears in his eyes.

"'You are dear to me, Lizzie!' he said, 'you link my childhood with my manhood. I do not satisfy you?'

"'I am not satisfied,' I returned very calmly, for an icy composure had come over me. 'You are good, angelic, but we are not suited to each other. Give me a brother's love; I will be a friend, if not a wife. Leave me now! Say no more!'

"He held the hand he had taken a moment, and looked at me very earnestly, then he folded me to his heart, and pressed his last kiss upon my lips and brow, murmuring, 'God bless you, Lizzie!'

"I watched him as he was lost in the forest, now appearing, now disappearing: when I could trace his figure no lon-

ger, I cast myself upon the autumn leaves that strewed the earth, and groaned over my work."

"Have you ever regretted it?" I asked, in a hushed voice.

"I regretted it at first, when I found myself so weak—heart-wrecked, with shivered hopes lying around me. I am more than satisfied now, for I realize that heaven did not create us for each other. I wait free and untramelled now for my true bridal hour. I wait to meet my beloved!"

"Where? who is he?"

"Kitty dear, perhaps the time may come when the spirit-world will seem as real to you as this world—when you will understand how this material case, your outermost body will be thrown off, like a shell from the tender seed. When you realize this, you will comprehend that I look towards heaven with an assurance of human joy that seems strange to you now. Men and women are dissevered halves, and their destiny is not accomplished until each half is mated to its own, so I shall meet mine some time: he may be on earth, 'toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,' and he may be in heaven. I am not impatient! If I meet him first in heaven, I shall be beautiful and young, and no dark river will temporarily divide us. We shall both grow more worthy with time; at least, I pray so."

"Now," I said, "I understand the youthful freshness of your nature; your life is filled with virgin thoughts and holy, innocent aspirations. You believe in heaven and joy because God's sacred word has been the light that has flowed in upon you, when your more interior being was opened; you look up to Him lovingly, as a Father who gives good gifts unto his children."

"As one obeys His will, appreciation of Him, and faith in the sweetness of our destiny spring up together."

"Is the gentleman you loved on earth, and is he married?"

"He is living, and he is not married! I think, Kate, that it is well enough for those who love, to marry, even if they are not created for each other! Pairs seldom meet on earth, and many cannot live without some affection; they expand under the cheering light of kindly eyes—they can bless each other, and strengthen each other in purity and holiness. But I think it is better to live single, unless the affection is very pure and strong, or unless there is a prospect of doing a deep and gentle good to the earth-companion."

"It seems very beautiful to me to see you waiting in such happy patience for your marriage with the true partner of your being." I said, "I shall do so, if I am strong enough to live unloved."

"You will not be, my Kate!"

"Why!" I asked, coloring deeply. I could not conceive that I could ever love another than I did; I could not conceive that there was a soul with a more really close affinity to mine than the one I loved: it flashed over me that when I became a beautiful angel Pliny might recognize this affinity —Grace might belong to another. God might permit her to be Pliny's better angel on earth. As I spoke to Miss Cardover, a servant called her from the room. I looked out upon the radiant earth, and my heart smiled as if under the light of a new firmament; but the words rose over my soul, "Worship in the true temple of to-day."

Then I went to my room, and repeated the holy prayer that had sustained me before, that I might love Grace and Mr. Cardover as a sister, yielding a consent to be loved less in return. It was very hard to pray thus; but when I uprose from my knees, a purer life had descended into my spirit, and I felt earnestly desirous to become good and angelic in

nature, as our Father would have us. I thanked Him that He had led me in my hour of suffering to a happy, brave spirit.

The days wore on, and I was borne up in the arms of a strong angel, the while she knew it not; she apprehended that she did me good, and gave me courage, but this she had done very often for others, and it was not remarkable to her that she blessed me.

The morning for my departure came. An hour brought me to my old home—it seemed a gloomy, brick prison—it was as painful to return to it as it had been to leave it. I opened the sitting-room door, and read on all the faces gathered there, the smiling sunshine of affection; they sprang forward to kiss and embrace me! How my heart reproached me! After the first glow of meeting was over, they exclaimed,

"Kitty, *can* you leave us?"

And I inclined my head with a smile and gathering tears, not daring to speak. Often that first day, I bit my lips, and started for a glass of water, to dispel the tide of sudden feeling that came over me; the family could not comprehend the eager *must* within me; but when they found I was determined, they seemed to give to my motives a nobleness which they lacked; their beautiful charity interpreted the conduct I could not explain.

"Without doubt, Kate," said cousin Mary, "you will as you desire, go on a mission to careless hearts that know nothing of life's real worth; I hope you may open to thirsting natures the pure wells of truth so seldom found by the wayside. Now that we must give you up, I can see that a new field may need you; we will try to strengthen you in your work."

Mr. Cardover came to spend the evening. After remaining in the room awhile, I left it and stole up to my

chamber, to ponder upon the three letters that offered me a situation. One home was in the sunny South, not far removed from the city of S——. This I favored; the letter was written with a graceful politeness that the others lacked; *they* hired me, this treated me as if my nature was not very far removed from mortals in general. The letter was written by a gentleman, and signed "Philip Henry;" he had three children who would need my care. I hastily wrote a letter giving some particulars which had been omitted, and making some inquiries, then the duties of the day were over.

The next afternoon I received a decisive answer. I was to go South for a year at least. In a few days I should leave home. There were various items to be attended to, so I put on my bonnet and went out shopping. It was dusk before I had finished my business. As I hurried home through the crowded streets, a pair of boots went clink clink after me. I turned into a more private street; then a hand touched my arm. It was Mr. Benzoni! "Will you walk with me one moment, Miss Hamilton?" he asked.

"I cannot!" I replied.

"Will you obtain me an interview with Grace?" he asked, impatiently.

"You have already been at the house, and she refused to see you!" I answered.

"But I have now that to communicate which will change her feeling!"

"What is it?" I inquired, for the first time looking in his eyes: the street lamp beneath which we stood shone on his pallid face.

"Madame Benzoni is dead. I learned it by the last steamer!"

I doubted his word, and asked, "How did she die?"

"By cholera!"

I shuddered, and would have left him, but he asked eager-

ly, "Will you arrange matters so that Grace can meet me somewhere?"

"She will not meet you."

"She will, if you advise her to do so. Will you?" he spoke thickly, as if agitation or the wine-cup had mastered him.

"No!" I said.

An angry light shot across his face: he clenched my arm, and said, "You must do it!"

"You are very chivalrous," I said, scornfully; but I could hardly suppress a scream, he held my arm so tightly.

He laughed bitterly, but kept my arm in his possession, although he held it more lightly. He said, "It is you who have prejudiced her against me. Answer me, have you not persuaded her not to see me?"

"She needed no persuasion, after having seen you once. Let go my arm, will you?"

"Will you persuade her to see me?" his eyes glared down on me with a determination that frightened me. Not being addicted to great courage, dreadful things flashed through my mind. What if he were demented, and should put his other hand in his pocket, take out a knife, and stab me to the heart. I trembled from head to foot. He saw my fear, and spoke more gently.

"I am not happy: I am not as I was. Have you no pity?"

"I do pity you: but Grace cannot see you, or be any thing to you. Why not give her up? Why not interest yourself in some other pursuit? Why not turn your thoughts in another direction? You can, if you will."

"I cannot!" he said.

"Won't you please to let me go?"

"Persuade Grace to see me."

"Her heart is entirely given to one who loves her in return."

"Oh, God!" he said, loosening his hold. He reeled against the lamp-post. Dreadful things flashed over me again. If he should fall down, what should I do? I looked up the street, saw a man coming, and darted towards him, catching his arm.

"Oh, sir!" I panted.

"Good heavens, Kate! what is the matter?" said the voice of Mr. Cardover. I was instantly reassured by meeting a friend so opportunely, and paused to catch breath. I looked around to see the condition of Mr. Benzoni: he was walking away. Poor man!

"Let us take this street," I said, and we turned into a cross street.

"How you tremble, Kate; what was it?"

I related the incident.

"You ought not to have been out at this hour alone."

"I was unexpectedly detained."

"Do I walk too fast for you?" he kindly inquired.

"No."

"Grace tells me you are going South to teach."

"Yes, I am."

"I thought you were too much attached to your home to leave."

"I think there is a spice of the rover in my composition. I look forward with great satisfaction to my gypsy life. I am tired of this dull, old Boston, although a more precious home than ours, there is not in it."

"You ought not to leave it, as it is not necessary for you to do so. Home is the best place for a young girl."

"Perhaps so! but I fear I shall consult my inclinations, rather than the sober judgment of those who would detain me."

"You are very wilful, Miss Kate. I think young ladies who are less independent are more—" he did not finish the sentence; I thought he would here added *lovable*, and it stabbed me to the quick. I hastily ran up the front steps when we reached home, saying "good night:" then recalling his habit of coming in, when he met us accidentally, I asked him to do so, but he declined, saying he had business to occupy him for the evening. Frank Morton sat in the dining-room with Gertrude and Josephine when I went in. I thought of Judith, and said,

"Frank, have you heard from Mrs. Benzoni lately?"

"Yes," he replied, "mother and I each got a letter by the last steamer."

"By the *last* steamer?" I inquired with emphasis.

"By the *last*, Miss Kate," he answered, turning over the leaves of his algebra, and coloring violently. It wounds his boyish pride to have his sister referred to, since her desertion. Miserable Benzoni! he did not remember that his wife's family and ours were on too friendly terms not to detect his falsehood. He hoped to beguile Grace away upon the strength of it.

CHAPTER XXI.

Two silver lamps shed a softened radiance throughout the dressing-room of Madame Benzoni: they shone upon jewels lying upon the toilet table, rich jewels which had been taken from their casket by the abandoned wife. They were all gifts from her husband, when they both dwelt in a world of love and bliss. Rarely had Judith worn them; sometimes when old memories swept over her overpoweringly, and she was startled to realize how hard and cold she had become, she would go to her jewels, and recall the exquisite beating of her heart, at the moment when they were given to her, with the lavish abandonment of idolatry. And if she were going to grace an evening company, she would sometimes don them with a pensive bitterness, as if they might still shed over her a halo of past joy. To-night she had taken them all out, and had gazed upon them, while a wild torrent of regret rushed over her. Oh! to recall the past! revenge slumbered, as it often did, and she only gasped forth despairing prayers for something that might fill her being with the bliss for ever gone; her impatient heart beat in mad rebellion against the fate that tore from her grasp the sweets of innocent love. She was lonely, and no blessed spell had enwrapt her since that halcyon morning, which closed in deepest night. With a sick longing, she looked for the hour when her husband

should come and kneel at her feet, and shower upon her wilder, warmer love than ever, for his cruel suspicions. With flashings of pride, she oft dreamed she would reject him,—with gushings of overwhelming affection, she oft dreamed she would lay her head upon his breast, never more to wander, to defy. She stood thus, gazing tearfully upon her treasures, when an old man-servant tapped at her door, and presented her with a letter. She had lost track of her husband within a few months, and sometimes the thought occurred to her, that he might be near her, watching her in disguise. She had questioned the servant about his master's movements; she suspected that he communicated with him, but she could obtain no satisfaction. She looked at her letter; it was from her mother, not Benzoni. Sinking into an arm-chair, she broke the seal; she had not read far, before she uttered,

"Oh God! is not this too much!" and the dread agony of that awful time when first the bolts of fate struck her, came to her again. She read on, but she learned nothing from the words: again, and again she strove to grasp all that the letter contained: at length she mastered it. Her head dropped wearily upon the arm of the chair; her heart was consuming beneath fire and torture. The last stroke had fallen; but she threw back defiance, the pitiful defiance of despair,—she could now bear with derisive laugh any thing that might come,—she was vulnerable no longer to fresh blows. She dared not die, for Judith had read and thought much of immortality of late; she must live and breathe, although every breath was agony. The letter ran thus:

"My Darling Child,—I would give all the world if you were here with me; if I could spend all my time in trying to make you happy. I thank you so much for your last letter. Your letters are more affectionate than they used to be. Never think for one moment, dearest Judith, that you

did not study my happiness as much as you ought, when you were home. Whenever I read an affectionate expression in your letters, I am so foolish, I cannot keep from crying. Many a time have I heard my female friends say that they never appreciated their mothers until they went out into the world. Judith, darling Judith, you have a mother whose heart will worship you until it ceases to beat; a mother who will go through fire and water for her child. Whenever you are sad, think of me; remember that I will always be faithful, that I would go with you to the darkest dungeon, to the most dismal place on earth, if I could comfort and help you. I hardly dare tell the news; I fear it will break your heart. I have entreated your father to let me visit you, that you may not be so forsaken. You are too proud to come back now, as matters have turned out. Well, my poor child, your husband is in Boston. He has not been here. I have had an awful time with Frank: he has not seen Mr. Benzoni yet, although he has watched for him. He carries a pistol in his pocket to shoot Benzoni with; it almost distracts me; you know I am so afraid of firearms. Frank is as pale as death all the time, and so excited; I know he would kill that man as soon as snap his finger. I would not tell you that your husband is here, if your father did not think it would be best. He says you might take a notion to live with him again, if he should come palavering around you, and he thinks he has treated you so shamefully, it would never do. He says I must tell you what Benzoni is about. He is trying to make love to Grace Percival again, or I imagine he is, for I have seen him call at the house. I can't tell how long he stayed, for the moment I saw him run up the front steps, I went to Frank and contrived to keep him busy for me a long time. You know Frank is a good boy, and almost always does any thing I want him to. I think as he grows older, he notices that your father is not always as kind and considerate towards

me as he ought to be. Some boys would feel themselves privileged to abuse their mothers if they saw that their fathers did not treat them with as much tenderness and respect as they ought. Frank has tact: you know tact with a noble heart can distil balm into many a wound. Sometimes when your father utters a contemptuous 'Pshaw!' at a remark of mine, Frank will color, and bite his lips to keep the tears away from his dear eyes. He has so often seen the tears in mine at such times—then after your father has left the room, he will think of something that needs my judgment. I could kiss him a million times for his kindness, for the dear child knows that his judgment is better than mine any day. You see he does it to please me. He spends a great many of his evenings with the Rodman children. I like to have him, for they have a good influence over him, and keep him from bad company. He said it was those children that broke him of the habit of speaking in a cross way. But I must stop talking of Frank: when I begin, it seems as though I never could stop. My poor, dear Judith, don't take what I have told you about Mr. Benzoni to heart. I know you can't help it in a measure, for you worshipped the ground he walked on. You must remember there is love in your own family for you; Frank has seemed to think more of you, since Benzoni left you, than he ever did before. He sends his love, also your father. You always have your mother's blessing, my darling. Kiss little Isadora ten thousand times for me. Oh! how I should like to see her. I shall be so glad when your answer comes to this.

"Your devoted mother,

"MARTHA MORTON."

Slowly a side door opened; unpractised feet came tottling in. Little Isadora reached her mother's chair in triumph, and stood looking up in her face with childish glee. She was

a marvel of infantile beauty and grace. Judith looked at her, but with unmoved eyes: her cold, stony stare half terrified the child; the mirth left her large eyes; her smiling lips began to quiver. Judith passed her hand across her forehead; she lifted up the little one with a murmured "my child," breathed in tones of tenderness.

"My child!" she repeated, as Isa stroked her cheek, and looked with a scared pitying gaze into her face. Judith burst into wild weeping; she sent up to heaven prayer, rather than mad defiance. She folded Ida to her heart, as if her innocence might yield a balm; and then, seeing a strange fear in the child's eyes, she kissed her once more, and took her into the other room, saying, "Marie, she must sleep with me to-night." Poor Judith, even her heartless heart was womanly in its sorrow. Life had taught her that she could not brave the present or future, without a God, and without tender human affections. Her thoughts wandered over the sea; wandered to the home that had cherished her. She looked within her mother's eyes, she heard her say, "Judith, I wish you loved me as some daughters love their mothers," and through her heart there welled a passionate remorse, a mighty sorrow that she had not chased away the meek reproach with tender words. Little had she dreamed in her careless happiness, that the hour was rolling towards her, when her only hope would be, to weep and die on a mother's breast. She longed pitifully, with an insatiable yearning, to read in some human eye a tenderness that might sustain her, ere she drooped in death. What was flattering homage in an hour like this? What the smiling compliments of the gifted? She needed *heart* now, not brain; and no heart came to uphold her.

Marie hastily entered. "Madame, the count and countess are waiting for you; and you are not dressed."

"I cannot go out to-night, Marie: I am ill."

Marie looked at her observantly, and disappeared. In a moment, a light, tripping step approached the door; a tap sounded.

"That heartless woman now!" broke from Judith's lips. Her unwelcome guest entered laughing, and exclaimed,

"You must go; you *shall* go, my dear Madame Benzoni. But, heavens! you are pale as the dead. What is the matter?"

"A sudden rush of blood to the heart or head, I think; I must not go out to-night," said Judith.

"Oh, nonsense! You will get over it in a few moments. Let me call your maid to dress you; may I?"

"Yes!" languidly responded the miserable woman, too weak to contend.

"What beautiful jewels!" exclaimed Madame Ranelli, as Judith approached the toilet table to lock them in their casket. "You are going to wear them?"

"No."

Judith was robed in white; it was a simple dress, fastening at the throat, and with long sleeves that concealed her beautiful arms. She wore no ornaments.

"Pray, put something in your hair," entreated the countess; "you look like a nun, or a martyred saint."

Judith passively consented to wear a white japonica that bloomed in a pot on the flower-stand. "I look now as if I were dressed for burial," she said; she strove to rally back her scattered vitality. They descended the broad marble stairs, and met the Count Ranelli in a reception room below. He looked surprised, as his eye fell upon the white apparition of Judith. There was pity in his eyes,—and *tenderness*. Such a look had never met Judith before; tears rose involuntarily, but she overcame them.

"You are not well enough to go," said the count, very gently. "Has my wife over-persuaded you?"

"It will be better for her, count," returned his lady. He handed them to the carriage without saying more. Madame Ranelli was a woman of violent temper, and indomitable self-will; a charming acquaintance, and a most trying bosom companion. Judith had fallen in with her, and each had been exceedingly pleased with the other. The intimacy that followed, had decreased Judith's partiality, but she felt that she could not afford to lose the friendship of so influential a woman as Madame Ranelli. The curtain of private life was lifted to her view, and she saw Count Ranelli, a man of many noble impulses, made completely miserable in his home; he was more fond of domesticity than the majority of his countrymen. Many a time had the deserted wife sat at their fireside, her heart brimming over with thoughts of one to whom she might have been a more thoughtful wife; she looked with wonder to see how idly Madame Ranelli crushed beneath her feet blossomings of peace and repose. Thoughtfulness is often bought at the hour of retribution; bought too late.

When Judith entered the soiree, the blaze of lights, the hum of voices dizzied her brain. She sunk upon a seat as if in a dream, and answered vacantly the questions addressed to her. "Take me to the air," she whispered to Count Ranelli.

They went out upon a portico, garlanded with vines, fragrant with delicious blossoms. The cool moonlight struck Judith's brow, and awoke her half-slumbering senses. Soft music stole upon her ear; dreamy tones, harmonizing well with the shadowy landscape stretching beneath the moon. The count inquired in a low voice if she were better, and drew her shawl more closely about her. She trembled to hear that voice alone: the only voice out of the many speaking near her that night, which had an accent of soothing

consolation. It said, "You are unhappy to-night, dear friend."

She was silent, but she turned to enter the house. Again the count spoke in low, tremulous tones, "Do you fear to tell me how sorrowful you are? I have sad hours also."

She was silent still, but her step was stayed. Her heart was thrilling with a wild thought,—she could not turn from the voice of the charmer. Not in the flush of eager, happy life are female feet most apt to wander down the steeps of ruin; not while the heart is glad to number its exulting bounds, but when it is poverty-stricken, and cries out for some anodyne that may lull it to rest or death. When the weary one has not where to lay her head,—when she has tasted the bitter waters of worldly friendship, and sees herself alone in the universe, then is the winning voice of the tempter perilous.

"Sweet friend, confide in me." The words broke on Judith's ear so tenderly. She was forgetting the stern world, and sterner duty, and God. An arm gently encircled her waist, and a hand took hers. Then was the spell broken; then was Judith enfranchised. She had not yet gone down the first steps: she was startled. Her little foot gave a proud, impatient stamp, and she flung aside the count's hand with the air of an empress. She was haughty Judith once more: the rich blood rushed to her cheeks; the glorious brilliancy returned to her eyes. She was prepared now to become the queen of the evening, and she was; but the smiles that flashed over her lip were scornful; disdaining the captives whom her beauty enslaved.

Lightly fell her footsteps as they entered the sacred precincts of her bed-chamber; upon her pillow slumbered her sinless one. The air of the room seemed holy after the dissipation of the night: its quiet wrought no soothing spell however; accusing angels haunted it, and doubt and fear and

helpless woe crept into Judith's heart. Her last hope had broken that day: she was objectless,—undone. He loved her then no longer; he turned to her whom she had wronged. Oh, heavy retribution! oh, miserable agony!

She unrobed herself, and stole beside her child; she laid Isa's dimpled hand upon her brow, and dared to pray, "God be pitiful." She shuddered at the prayer, "God be just." She slept, and while she dreamed, the guardian angels who hovered about the child, murmured over her, "Even to this heart suffering comes as a regenerator. Behold! she prayeth!"

CHAPTER XXII.

A NEW home! and all seemed like the fairy changes of a dream. The parting on board the ship; the tears and smiles; the "write often;" the "God bless you;" the "good-bye."— The ocean's boundless extent! the fresh current of a glorious exhilarating life; the extinguishing sea-sickness. It had all swept by. A light airy villa crowns a sloping hill; a silver flashing river rolls below, and boats rowed by slaves holding gay young men hasten by. Afar, an even line of clouds betrays the near proximity of the sea. And within the airy villa sits Kate. Yes! I sat within my snug little chamber, which opened from the school-room. Both were covered with straw matting. I could make it look as cosy as a carpet. My chamber window overlooked the river, and the distant woods: I sometimes stepped out upon a light balcony from the window, and looked off upon the unknown country around, as I gazed into the unknown future; with a desire to explore it. I had three pupils, Jessie, Ellen, and Fred, a young fellow of four years. Ellen declared that she *would* sleep with me, the moment I arrived. She was a little wiry, black-eyed girl of six. The children all slept in the room with Aunt Lucy, a fat, good-natured colored woman, with a red and yellow turban. I was determined that my chamber should be as sacred a retreat as possible. I pinned up two or three pictures in

home-made frames, and every morning culled a glass of flowers, to beautify my little home. The rest of the house was not home to me yet. Bess, the chambermaid, came in the morning after I arrived, to make my bed and "tidy" my room. I told her I would take care of my own room; she need only bring up fresh water every morning. She rolled her eyes a little, and said "Yes, Miss." I heard her expatiating to Aunt Lucy afterwards about my being no great thing, "didn't know enough to be waited on." I didn't like the idea of being looked down upon by Bess, and perceived that I should be obliged to be very dignified and decided in my deportment towards her until she became convinced that I was somebody. The children were perfectly ungovernable. I tried winning looks and tones, and resorted to the utmost serenity of expression. But Fred "ha, ha'd," and vacated the school-room in the midst of my imperative gesticulating. When the family had acquired some confidence in me, I anticipated taking the self-will out of those three children with considerable unction. Jessie was an ill-mannered girl of eleven: she was not so well informed as a child of six should have been. The evening I arrived, the family were seated at the tea table: the servants ushered me into the room. They were expecting me. Mrs. Henry rose and took my hand kindly, inquiring if I were not fatigued. She bade a servant to take my bonnet and shawl, told Jessie to take me into her own bedroom close at hand to wash, and then showed me my seat at the table. She was a delicate, pretty woman of thirty, with soft blue eyes, and gentle manners. Her husband was not present. Miss Baldwin, a maiden sister of fifty, a stern, intelligent-looking woman, finished her supper, and watched me while I was taking mine.

"You're the teacher?" said Fred.

"Hush, Frederick," said Miss Baldwin; "little boys should be seen, not heard."

"Say, are you the teacher?" he repeated, jerking my arm.

I answered in the affirmative; his mother said, "Don't, Freddie dear!"

"Were you placed under the captain's care, Miss Hamilton?" inquired Miss Baldwin with an inquisitor-like air, that assured me that I should soon be sifted thoroughly.

"Yes, ma'am, I was," I returned, looking at her, and thinking, "I hope you will prove a friend."

"Have you parents, Miss Hamilton?"

"My parents died when I was a child."

"Did you ever teach before?"

"No, ma'am."

"How did you happen to think of coming South?"

"I have always wanted to teach at the South since I have been old enough to think about getting my living. I used to have very romantic ideas of Southern life and chivalry."

"You did, hey?" and she smiled cordially.

"Get off this chair!" said Fred, giving me a brush with his little arm.

"Freddie, Freddie," said his mother, "don't disturb the lady."

"Get up, I tell you!" vociferated Fred, as I looked at him with as much serenity as I could. "Why don't you get up?"

"Your mother would rather I should sit still," I answered.

"No, you shan't!" and he employed both hands in striking me. His little mother took him, and by dint of great exertion, succeeded in dragging him out of the room, and consigning him to Aunt Lucy.

"Minnie," said her sister, "that boy needs a sound thrashing. What's the use of your *dearing* him, when he is

as ugly as sin? I don't like to see children abused, but I like to have them know the round world was made for some one besides them."

Minnie said nothing, but looked pained.

The next morning, I gathered my little flock around me, and examined their requirements. Jessie read execrably, Ellen worse. "I've read enough; I don't want to read any more!" said Jessie.

"Read this next verse," I said, trembling lest she would not obey me. She condescended to read it, after saying,

"Oh pshaw! what's the use?"

Ellen had a fancy to be very good and gracious: I did not admire it entirely, as I could see that she wished me to contrast her deportment with that of the two others. But upon the whole, I began to have a sort of intellectual attachment for the children;—a desire to see them improve: they had not entered into my heart irresistibly. Fortunately one cannot teach very well, without becoming deeply attached to children; without loving to watch intimately the unfolding of their characters. I was not really sorry to have difficulties to contend with; they diverted my thoughts. It pleased me to reform outrageous children, rather than to deal with amiable little saints, characterless, and compliant upon all occasions. As the days wore on, I became unspeakably homesick. Mrs. Henry was very kind, but she watched me with an unsleeping observance;—she noticed every sentiments I expressed. One evening a number of gentlemen called in: I had been so lonely, that I enjoyed their conversation very much. One was witty in the extreme, and I laughed heartily, although I did not speak except when addressed. Since that evening, Mrs. Henry had been rather more distant in her manners to me. I could not understand it. Possibly she thought a governess had no right to be amused at aristocratic wit. Yet when ladies called, she seemed to try to draw me

into conversation, and showed herself gentle-hearted and well-bred. She asked me once at the tea-table if I belonged to any church.

"I do!" I answered

"What church?" demanded Miss Baldwin quickly.

I told her.

"Do you believe in the Bible?" questioned Mrs. Henry.

"Certainly."

"In a change of heart?"

"Certainly."

"Do you try to be a Christian?" Mrs. Henry looked at me almost pleadingly.

"I do try!" I answered.

She left the room, and her sister said, "Minnie's last governess was an unprincipled person; she dreaded to get another, but Mr. Henry insisted upon it. I hope, Miss Hamilton, we shall be happily disappointed in you!"

"I hope so!" I said coloring, yet almost indignant at the fear they had betrayed,—the suspicion with which they had observed my actions.

"In what respect was the last governess unprincipled?" I inquired.

Miss Baldwin blushed in her turn, but answered shortly, "She did not instruct the children properly."

"I should think they had been somewhat neglected. Do you think Mrs. Henry would be willing that I should govern them as I wish in the school-room? I should not strike them of course, or shut them up in the dark."

"Yes! I hope you *will* control them."

At this moment carriage wheels stopped in front of the house. Presently two gentlemen entered unceremoniously. The tallest was about forty-five, an exceedingly handsome, pleasant-looking man. Miss Baldwin bowed to him stiffly, merely condescending to utter,

"Your servant, Mr. Henry."

"And yours, madam," responded Mr. Henry, bowing. He added, turning to the young man with him, "This is my son, Egbert, Miss Baldwin."

"How do you do, sir?" said Miss Baldwin, extending her hand. She introduced me. Egbert was a youth of nineteen, with blue eyes, rather a flat nose, and a lisp.

"Where is Minnie?" asked Mr. Henry, with a slightly embarrassed air. She came in at the instant, and gazed in surprise at him; the warm color rushing over her face, then receding. She stood rooted to the spot, deathly pale.

"I am glad to see you, Minnie!" said her husband, kissing her, and leading her from the room. I heard the sound of passionate weeping issuing from her bedroom, and her voice, "Oh! would to God I had died first!"

I went to my room, and wondered what tragedy the heart of Mrs. Henry was familiar with. Mr. Henry had been absent from home two months, and I was sure his wife was not expecting him.

It was very stiff and unsocial at meals. The younger children did not sit down with us, as they had been in the habit of doing in their father's absence. Mr. Henry had a pleasant way of speaking to the servants. He addressed me kindly too. Mrs. Henry seemed unhappy, but sometimes her eyes rested furtively upon her husband, and a world of love and sorrow was in her look. Miss Baldwin was grim as a grenadier. Egbert asked me one morning if I was not very fond of a half-blown rose. After he and his father had left the dining-room, Miss Baldwin exclaimed, with uplifted hands,

"Isn't he a fool!" and thereupon she broke into one of the heartiest laughs I ever heard from her. "If he looks like his mother, Minnie," she said, "your predecessor must have been a beauty."

"Don't, Adelaide!" said Mrs. Henry. I went to my arduous duties. Fred had been growing worse and worse every day, until on this morning he fairly culminated. I sat hearing Ellen's lesson—taking advantage of a time when Fred lay on the floor picking straws out of the matting. Presently he advanced behind my chair, and stuck them in my hair. I said nothing until he scratched my neck with them.

"Stop, Freddie!" I exclaimed, turning around, "that hurts me."

"Glad of it!" he retorted.

"I shall punish you if you do so again," I said, looking directly in his eyes, for I had determined to conquer or die.

"You dasn't!" he elegantly responded. I went on with Ellen's lesson. He gave me another scratch. I felt equal to turning the earth out of its orbit. I went to my room, tied two pocket handkerchiefs together, and returned. Fred was laughing, and looked at me defyingly. I took hold of him. "No, you don't!" he said, kicking and striking: he was an amazingly strong child. At the peril of life and limb, I succeeded in tying him to the back of a little bench, and sat down overcome by caloric. Fred screamed about ten minutes, and then was suddenly silent: he had extricated himself, and stood looking out of the window, when I turned to see what was the matter with him. I groaned inwardly, but felt quite anxious to persevere in gaining the victory.

"Freddie," I said, "you cannot be untied until I untie you myself!" I had a more terrible battle with him than at first; he kicked, thrashed, and roared. I thought I had tied him more securely, but just caught his hands in time to prevent a second escape. I sat down beside him, and

placed his head in my lap, while I held both his hands, saying,

"You cannot stir, Freddie, until you promise to be a good boy."

"I won't!" he yelled, and set up a succession of unearthly shrieks. I allowed him this satisfaction, merely remarking, "It won't make any difference, if you scream all your life, Fred!"

Mrs. Henry put her pale face in at the door. "What is the matter?" she asked.

"I have told Freddie he cannot be untied, until he promises to be good."

"Oh! I thought perhaps he was hurt!" she said, closing the door.

"Mother! Mother!" roared the child. I held him two hours before he would give up. I was absolutely ready to faint from exhaustion, when I asked him the last time, "Will you try to be a better boy, Freddie?" His cries had died away into sobs.

"Yes!" welcome sound!

"Say, *yes, ma'am*, Freddie."

He hesitated a moment, then obeyed. I untied the poor little fellow, fully able to sympathise in his worn, exhausted feelings. I washed his dirty face, and combed his curly hair, ready to cry with pity over his cowed look, and obedient motions. I loved him for the first time, and his fearful look went to my heart: the obedience of slavish fear is a pitiful thing. I thought of a poor wretch I had seen dragged through the street once, between two constables. Even so my little pupil had given up to me.

"Do you want to play on the lawn with your rabbit, Freddie, before dinner?" I asked.

"Yes, ma'am!" he meekly answered, and went down stairs. Jessie and Ellen had looked on at first with awe-

struck faces, then over Jessie's cheek the tears had slowly dropped. Ellen had softly wept too, but they had said nothing.

"Come here, girls!" I said, after Freddie's disappearance. They came, and I talked to them a long time, in a very faint, heart-breaking way, until they understood my feelings and duties towards them. Ellen went away when I had finished talking; but Jessie laid her hand on my arm, and said, "I understand you, Miss Hamilton. I'll try never to make you any trouble."

"Will you kiss me, Jessie!" I said. She threw both arms around my neck with the eager clasp of a loving heart. When the afternoon lessons were over, I told the children a long story. Freddie listened with apparent interest, and when I had finished, he asked Jessie in a whisper, questions about the story. He dared not ask me. After tea Ellen begged me to go out on the piazza, in rather an affected way, to look at the sunset. She had seen me look with delight upon a glorious sunset several times, and had ever since pretended to be enraptured whenever the sun went down. We went out, and Mr. Henry followed us, tossing up Freddie, and saying pleasant things to the children, who hung about him idolatrously. He has the happy faculty of scattering them the moment he tires of playing with them. Old Aunt Debbie, Bess's mother, was hobbling along painfully. Fred threw a paper wad at her: he kept paper in his pocket for this purpose, and he had aimed more than one at me since I had been in authority over him.

"Poor Aunt Debbie!" said Ellen, "she has the rheumatism so she can hardly walk."

"Poor thing!" I echoed.

"She *is* a poor, forlorn creature!" Mr. Henry said kindly. He thrust his hand in his pocket, and threw her a silver dollar.

"Give that to me!" said Fred, scrabbling down the steps of the piazza. He picked it up and pocketed it, before the rheumatic old woman could stoop down. Mr. Henry stamped his foot, and said sternly, "Hand it to her, Fred!" The child looked up to see if he were in earnest, then reluctantly gave the money to Aunt Debbie.

"Isn't it better the old woman should have it, Miss Hamilton?" Mr. Henry asked, with his handsome smile.

"I think so," I returned, smiling the gratitude I felt for his kindness to the old creature. Miss Baldwin, who had been looking at us from the window, now came out, and said in a tone I did not like,

"You will take cold out here, Miss Hamilton. Hadn't you better come in with the children?"

"If you think we shall take cold, certainly," I answered, the angry color rising to my cheek. I betook myself to my own quarters, wishing Miss Baldwin would not take it upon herself to be a spy upon me. She was a man-hater in general, and she hated Mr. Henry in particular. She was always making cutting remarks about the degeneracy of *man*kind at the table. Mr. Henry colored a little sometimes, but he was never betrayed into any expression of anger: he was uniformly kind and gentle. I could not but admire his conduct; every thing I saw in him made me like him better. He treated his wife with respect, and I never heard her express a wish which he did not gratify. Yet there was an evident coldness between them. I thought, when I looked at them sometimes, that nothing but the interference of one like Miss Baldwin, could have divided two hearts seemingly so full of genuine feeling and benevolence. I began to dislike that elderly lady; she did not seem willing Mr. Henry should take a moment's comfort. She seemed almost angry with me because I treated him politely, and answered his remarks at the table. I pitied him so much,

I could not help wishing he had a more congenial home. One evening when Egbert and I were alone in the dining-room a moment, he said in his smiling etiquette-book manner,

"I would not have you understand, Miss Hamilton, that I am in the habit of making personal remarks; yet I must say that it strikes me unpleasantly to see a person so devoid of polish as Miss Baldwin. My father's second marriage would have been fortunate if it had not been for her. She tries to make trouble, and often succeeds in creating jealousy in Mrs. Henry's mind in regard to my father." Mr. Henry came in, and I disappeared with more alacrity than usual. Miss Baldwin's espionage was explained—it had been intensified since the return of the lord of the manor. Could it be that she was making evil out of my careless acts? that she thought I could not be trusted to speak alone with Mr. Henry? I laughed the idea to scorn: it was so absurd!

"Will you go to the lecture, Minnie, to-night?" asked Mr. Henry.

"What is the subject?—and who lectures?"

"Geology is the subject, and young Mr. Bedell delivers the lecture," replied Mr. Henry.

"Bedell!" said I, looking up in surprise. "Is his given name James, and is he a Northerner?"

"Yes," said Mr. Henry, "he is a townsman of yours. Do you know him?"

"Oh, yes! he is an old friend. How I should like"—I stopped.

"Suppose we all go!" said Miss Baldwin. "I like that Mr. Bedell. He is one of the few sensible young men, so rare to be found."

Mr. Henry ordered out the carriage, and it soon bore us to the city. The hall was full when we entered, but the lecture had not begun. I trembled for James, lest his em-

barrassment should be extreme. I felt sure he had not seen our party. He rose; his eye keen and calm, roved over his audience; he commenced delivering his lecture in a clear, collected manner: it was strong, sound, and often eloquent. I looked at him with reverence for the heroic will which had conquered his constitutional bashfulness,—which had given him strength to appear before men, shorn of the defects which would have prevented an appreciation of his intellect and acquirements. He closed his lecture nobly; he looked more than handsome, almost inspired; his voice rolled forth richest music. Every gesture was appropriate. I could scarcely believe that erect form, that face glowing with expression, that white forehead from which the hair was dashed, belonged to James Bedell, the veritable James, to whom I had been introduced three years before. My wonder did not decrease, when I saw the courteous quietness of manner with which he received the congratulations of his friends. He came down the aisle where we still stood: he met my eager look: any old friend would have been dear in that strange land; I could not conceal my pride and pleasure altogether.

"Kate!" he exclaimed, his face flushing with surprise, and I thought, joy. His cordial welcome was like good tidings. He had not heard that I lived at the South.

"Where are you going? may I walk with you, or have you friends?" he asked. He had met Mr. Henry's family before, so that an introduction was unnecessary. Mr. Henry politely invited him to ride out to "The Wren's Nest," as his place was modestly called, and spend an hour. He looked at his watch, and declined. Then he shook hands with me: he gave me a look as if he would search my thoughts. It said, "What do you think of me now?" and in my heart I said, "Oh! if I could forget one who sways my spirit as the moon sways the ocean tides."

"That Mr. Bedell is a very fine young man," said Miss Baldwin, in quite a friendly tone next morning.

"I am surprised you should think so," said Mr. Henry sarcastically, "when you have no proof that he is immaculate."

"I have a little discernment," retorted Miss Baldwin. She was called out of the room; Mr. Henry said jestingly,

"Do you think, Miss Hamilton, my sister-in-law had sufficient discernment last evening to discover that there were *infinite depths* in a look that was bestowed on you by that same fine young man?"

"I don't know," I answered, with a startled blush, and added, "if her imagination equals Mr. Henry's, she can probably discern any thing she wishes."

Mr. Henry laughingly responded, "When the wedding day is fixed upon, repose a brotherly trust in me, by naming it, will you?"

"Oh, yes!" I acquiesced with a glance and a smile. Miss Baldwin came in, in the midst of this jesting; her friendly manner was gone. A young girl, daughter of a neighbor, came in to spend the evening: she was scarcely civil to her. After she had gone, she exclaimed impatiently, "Harriet Thorn's brains could be squeezed into a peanut shell."

I was inclined to agree with her. She was a pretty creature, with a brilliant complexion and bright blue eyes; there was a certain hardness in them which I did not like, however: her voice was rather loud and shrill, but her frivolous, frequent laugh wrote out her character in itself, as it rang boisterously through the room. She took a desperate fancy to me; when she went away, she whirled me out into the hall with her, and vowed she doted on me: the next minute she "tra la la'd," and asked Mr. Henry if he was not glad to escort such a "giddy piece" home. "Oh, dear!" she exclaimed, "I wish we had more neighbors, so that I could go out every evening. Come on, Mr. Henry! you'll

have to trip it pretty fast if you expect to keep up with me." She waltzed down the broad stone walk with a "tra la la!"

"That idiotic girl!" Miss Baldwin vehemently uttered, as her shrill laugh penetrated through the closed windows and doors.

"She is too lively," said Egbert, "but more brilliant than idiotic, Miss Baldwin."

"Why didn't you go home with her instead of your father, sir?" demanded Miss Baldwin.

"Some one, I will not say to whom the duty belonged, but some one neglected to introduce me."

"Indeed! that is the reason we were denied the edification of listening to any remarks from you."

"It certainly was," said Egbert, with grave reproach. He retired to his room with his usual, "Good-evening, ladies."

"Sister," said Mrs. Henry, "I wish you would not speak so to that poor fellow; he has never done us any harm; he has his follies, but he seems kind-hearted, and I would rather retain his good will."

"Well, Minnie, I can't help it. Nature did not bestow on me your gentle disposition; I'll try, however."

"Nature gave you a noble heart, Adelaide. Your prejudices make you unjust."

"I suppose they do," sighed Adelaide. She is utterly devoted to Mrs. Henry. Every thing where she can have control, must yield to her sister's wish or comfort. I loved sometimes to sit and hear her talk, when she was in good spirits, and I liked to hear her hearty laugh. Sometimes she would come in the school-room after lessons were over, and chat an hour or two,—then would spring up in my heart a liking for her; she was well read, and we preferred the same authors. She often looked at me so kindly from her hazel eyes, and seemed to feel a positive interest in me; again, a cold suspicion marked her manner, when I was not conscious of

having done wrong. She kept me liking and disliking her all the time. One afternoon she sat in the school-room; one of Jessie's books fell behind her desk: she drew out with it, a small Bible, and exclaimed, "Oh! here is Miss Hartly's little Bible after all. She looked and looked for it, and cried and looked! Shall we send it to her, Aunt Addie?"

"Give it to me," said Aunt Addie sternly, "and go down stairs this instant!"

Jessie went pouting from the room, mumbling to herself, "Needn't be so cross about it." Miss Baldwin soon followed her, and I sat down to write a letter. Jessie came in, and asked,

"What did she do with it?"

"With what?"

"With her Bible? she won't let any of us mention her name."

I wondered at this mystery, but only answered, "She took it with her."

"I don't intend to mention her name, but she was always good to us, she never could make us mind though."

"Well, Jessie, if your aunt don't want you to talk about her, you ought not to do it." I made this remark from principle, not inclination, for I was very curious to learn the history of one who had occupied my own position in the family. Jessie disappeared, and came back: she placed in my hand a daguerreotype. I opened it, saying, "Whose is it?" But Jessie kept her lips shut very tight. It was a lovely face, surrounded with careless, natural ringlets: the sweet flexible lips seemed as if repressing a happy smile,—the countenance was childlike and tender, not self-relying or spirited. That fair, low brow upon which the hair waved so softly, could not have seen more than seventeen summers. I could not bear to give up the picture, but Jessie seemed anxious to get it into her possession again. She whispered,

"Aunt Addie don't know I have it. *She*, you guess who, don't you? well, *she* gave it to me long before she went away. Aunt Addie thought I gave it back to *her*, you know who. I did put it in *her* hand, but I took it back again, and hid it. Oh! how *she* did cry, when she kissed us children good-bye. We all cried: but don't tell I told you!"

"Run down stairs now, I must write," I said, but I did not write. I thought of that sweet face. I had not much time to think quietly, however, for Ellen soon burst into the room, clapping her hands and exclaiming in a high key, "Oh! Miss Hamilton, mother says Jep may take us rowing on the river, if you would like to go with us. Jep is down there, cleaning out the boat now."

"The ground is wet from the shower, Nellie, and it is quite a little walk by the road."

"But we can take a short cut through the garden. We can pass through Mr. Thorn's side gate. Ah! Miss Hamilton, now don't say no."

"Well," I answered, overcome by Nellie's deep blue, imploring eyes, "we'll go!"

We met Mr. Henry on our way to the river side. The children besought him to accompany us, and he did so. Jep, a woolly-headed boy of forty, had scrubbed the boat very nicely, and covered the seats with bits of carpet. Mr. Henry, with an attentive eye to our comfort, sent him back for buffalo robes, and we were soon floating up the river, amid quiet, almost primeval scenery. Jessie and I took lessons in rowing; it was a long time before we did any thing but turn the skiff round and round, amid the laughter and shouts of the passengers. Mr. Henry was full of gay, genial humor. I could not help wishing there was as much good feeling in the whole family as in our part of it. We all seemed to feel that we had escaped from cold, prying eyes. It was an absolute delight to laugh at Mr. Henry's jokes, and not to be brought

suddenly to terra firma by Miss Baldwin's voice or look. Freddie was comical beyond belief. We reached home in high good humor.

"See there, Miss Hamilton!" said Nellie, pointing to a black and blue spot, where I had pinched my hand in opening Mr. Thorn's gate.

"Shocking! isn't it, Nellie?" I said, looking at the wound.

The next morning I met Mr. Henry in the hall. He laughed and said, "I have provided against your being hurt again with that gate. I sent a boy to put a new lock on it."

"Oh, you are very thoughtful. I am obliged to you," I answered. I met Mrs. Henry at the instant coming down stairs; she had heard the few words that had been spoken. I could not bear to see such a reproving look in her sweet face; I reflected on the occasion she had for giving me that look, and could see no cause for it. Her husband was always respectful; indeed, no one ever treated me with more respect; he was never coarse or ungentlemanly; every sentiment he expressed was refined. This persecution of him distressed me. At the top of the stairs I met Miss Baldwin; she had not opened her lips to me since the boat ride, and she passed me silently. She often seemed gloomy and unhappy. I passed her without looking at her, then on the impulse of the moment exclaimed,

"Miss Baldwin, will you come to my room a moment?"

She looked at me in surprise, but instantly turned about and followed me. We entered my little chamber; she took a chair, and I sat on the bed. I spoke instantly, for I began to grow embarrassed. "Miss Baldwin, if it is possible, I hope you will tell me why you seem offended with me. I want to do right, and I *know* I deserve no cold suspicions. Your manner implies them." Here, according to a detesta-

ble habit, I began to cry, at the very moment when I wished to be dignified, and to insist upon my rights. Miss Baldwin sat entirely silent, until I had dried my tears. They had washed away all embarrassment and timidity.

"Isn't it better that we should understand each other?" I asked. "I would rather you would be frank enough to tell me wherein I have displeased you. I have entered the family as a stranger, prepared to be on good terms with all. I cannot consent to fail in politeness to one half, for the sake of pleasing the other. I cannot take sides in a family misunderstanding. I simply desire to be a devoted friend and teacher to the children. If the elder members of the family do not trust me, I shall leave, and very soon."

"Miss Hamilton," and Miss Baldwin fixed a piercing look upon me, "you speak very candidly. I like you for it, but I should be better pleased to have you explain why you receive Mr. Henry's notice and attentions with so much pleasure and encouragement."

The blood mounted like fire to my forehead: I could not restrain a scornful curve of the lip, as I said, "You have heard the French proverb, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" I walked to the window, then went back to my seat, saying, "I wish you would point out every impropriety in my manner to Mr. Henry. I am not conscious of any."

She still kept her eyes upon me. "You will speak perfect truth?" she said.

"I will," I answered.

"In your secret heart have you not thought Mr. Henry admired you?"

I hesitated a moment, then said, "I never thought of it definitely. I think now that he probably does in a measure; not as much, though, as I admire him."

Miss Baldwin compressed her lips. "You do not fear to say that you admire him?"

"Certainly not. As soon as I saw him, I thought he would seem like a father to me, when I became acquainted with him. You see I forgot at the moment that likes and dislikes were not suitable between employer and employed."

"A father!" Miss Baldwin contemptuously uttered. "Miss Hamilton, don't affect so much innocence."

"Thank God, I have seen too little vice in my lifetime, to recognise it readily," I answered, as my heart burned under her unmerited scorn. "It is easy for me to understand that you have wronged Mr. Henry, if you can impute evil to me with so little cause. The whitest soul would look black through a darkened glass, and the most innocent actions guilty. I do not doubt that Mr. and Mrs. Henry might be happy in each other's love at this moment, if cruel suspicions had not tortured their love to death."

"I am not very suspicious by nature," Miss Baldwin replied.

"You are a man-hater, and look for evil in them, as a matter of course. I do not see that we can understand each other, after all. As I am not willing to be watched, and suspected of wrong motives every day, I will avoid it. Will you please tell Mrs. Henry I have given up my charge?" I had never been so intensely angry and wounded. I expected Miss Baldwin would leave the room, but she sat still. I left the room myself to be rid of her presence. Without thinking where I went, I bent my steps to the garden, and strolled on to a grove of trees. I encountered Mr. Henry. As I met his look I became conscious that tears were dropping fast over my cheeks.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Nothing," I responded, provoked to have met him when I was so deeply excited.

"Stop one moment," he said gently, yet authoritatively. "If your feelings have been hurt or wounded by any mem-

ber of my family, I have a right to know it. If any thing else has disturbed you, I am sorry. Who has been talking to you? My sister-in-law?"

"Yes, I am going away this very day."

He looked greatly vexed. "I had hoped, for my children's sake, we might have retained a good teacher. They have run wild always, because Adelaide Baldwin has constantly succeeded in making trouble. I have learned to bear her taunts, knowing they are but the offspring of her suspicious brain. It is not easy for me to forgive that woman the unhappiness she has occasioned in my family. A man seeks rest and content within his home: you may have perceived that there is little sunshine there for me. I had hoped you might have taught my children to be a blessing to me. But I will not seek to detain you; you have the right to seek a more peaceful home." He spoke very sadly. I remembered that I had hoped to do the children good; they were already improving fast. Why should I forsake my post, because of that jealous woman, who would probably drive the next governess away in the same manner.

"I will stay," I said.

"Thank you," Mr. Henry replied, with a glad look. I hurried from him, and went in the house. There sat Miss Baldwin, where I had left her.

"Let us be friends," I said, holding out my hand. "Won't you trust me?" My anger had vanished when I reflected how unhappy the poor creature made herself by such a disposition. She took my hand cordially, and looked right into my eyes. "I believe you are honest," she said. "*I trust you.* Oh! if you knew all that I know, you would not wonder that I suspect every one. I have spoken unkindly, unjustly to you, I believe."

"Oh, say nothing about it. I was very angry and uncivil. I am sorry. Now, shall we begin anew?"

"Yes. Will you stay?"

"I will."

"I must still say, avoid Mr. Henry. He is a perfect wretch, an unmitigated villain—worse than a murderer, for he kills his wife by constant torture."

"I will try to avoid him," I said, desiring to stop this tirade, and shocked at its extravagance, when I daily saw Mr. Henry's kindness to his wife. Since that time every thing had gone on pleasantly. I had most carefully avoided Mr. Henry, and both Mrs. Henry and her sister had been very kind and affectionate to me. It seemed sincere; yet I half feared that I was treading on a volcano.

A few weeks after I stepped within the library to look for Freddie. Mr. Henry sat there writing.

"Come here," he said, looking up, and then resuming his writing. I went to the table, saying, "Do you want me?"

"You have taken great pains to avoid being tainted by me," he said.

"I am not afraid of being tainted by you," I replied. "You ought to know that. But it is certainly best to keep peace in the family."

"You have gone over to the other side. Miss Baldwin has convinced you."

"No, she has not. She says nothing about you now. I have never believed her insane prejudices."

"Honor bright! Shake hands, then." I shook hands with him, and turned away, while the handsome smile yet lingered on his lip.

"Ah! Miss Hamilton," he said, rising, just as I was going out of the door, "I have a new history here, I have just been buying. I wish you would look at it, and see if Jessie is sufficiently advanced to study it." There was an eagerness in his tone, an expression in his eyes, that suddenly de-

stroyed the perfect freedom I had always felt with him. I became aware that he did not reverence me, as I had supposed from his manner always. My eye fell beneath his look, and the scarlet rose to my temples.

"Some other time," I said, scarcely knowing how to act.

"Look at it now, my child," he answered, and I knew that the look was not removed, and that the handsome smile accompanied it. A proud, disdainful anger leaped to my heart; I was poor—dependent; therefore in his cruel selfishness, he never thought that my God was my protector. I closed the door, and went up stairs. I thought if I had been in Mrs. Henry's place, I should have wept wild tears to have seen on a husband's face, that look and smile of interest for another. The veil had fallen from my eyes; it was true, after all, that the unhappiness of the family was Mr. Henry's fault. Miss Baldwin hated him with justice, because he was killing her sister's peace; in truth he must be breaking that sweet wife's heart. He had not a holy love for her.

School was over for the day; I took my sewing and went to the sitting-room.

"What is the matter?" asked Miss Baldwin, who was alone. "Your face is flushed."

"Every thing has changed to me within a brief half hour!" I answered, sitting down by her. "I have always believed you were unjust to Mr. Henry; now I do not."

"Ah!" she simply said, with a quick look of inquiry.

"He has not said any thing to me that was not perfectly right it itself, but his inner nature flashed out in a look. I realize now that he is unworthy of his tender, pure wife. I see that his handsome exterior and his graceful manner are untrue interpreters of himself: he does not seem to me any more a noble, persecuted man, and you do not now seem a merely suspicious woman, nor is Mrs. Henry a weak dupe. I see the truth now."

Miss Baldwin's hazel eyes looked upon me with the kind of fondness that they turned on her sister; this look gave me joy, for I could not forbear yearning after the love of a strong heart, a motherly and yet sisterly heart.

"I should have told you," she said, "every particular of his detestable career, if Minnie had not besought me not to reveal his failings. She hopes he will do better all the time: she loves him still to idolatry. He often pets her when he cannot find any one else to attract his attention. These rare words of kindness keep her in constant torture; they prevent her from overcoming the last remnant of affection; if that was accomplished, she would grow calm, and he would lose the power of moving her:—it will come to this in the end, but oh! it is fearful before one reaches such calmness."

"If she could love him as a sister loves an erring brother, without relying upon a pure affection from him, might she not be happier, and do him some good?" I asked.

"No," returned Miss Baldwin, in her abrupt way; "you have never been married, and you know nothing about it. Now that you have discerned for yourself that Mr. Henry is less than divine, I suppose there is no harm in saying that he has done every thing for effect since you have been here; he always acts for effect when we have a new governess. Do you wonder that I could not refrain from watching you, when I knew that Mr. Henry was one of the most artful, as well as the most fascinating of men? I feared he would interest you long before you dreamed of it."

"A married man?" I asked, as a glow of indignation rose in my heart. "You did not believe then that I was governed by principle, or that compassion for his wife could enter my being?"

"I have very little faith in human nature; when you have lived as long as I have, you will find it difficult to be

trusting. You will loathe, abhor and detest men; they are so selfish, so unmerciful to women."

"Is not Mr. Henry ordinarily kind to his wife?"

"He gives her any amount of money she asks for; he whistles when she upbraids him: this she very rarely does —sometimes he reasons with her, and tells her to seek her happiness wherever she can find it, and he will do the same. He knows she never would dishonor herself. He has not the least faith in woman's innate purity; he thinks every one has a price; it is this low, base appreciation of woman that makes me despise him so intensely: it is a revelation of his own true character."

"What kind of a mother had he?"

"She died in his infancy."

"Has he sisters?"

"No; he never had."

"Poor Freddie! his childhood needs to be circled about with holiness. I am truly glad that I understand Mr. Henry. From this hour I will devote my soul to Freddie: I will teach him to distinguish right and wrong, and will strive to impress Jessie and Ellen with an idea that they are in a measure responsible for Freddie's future. Let us keep the children pure; let us make them gentle by their seeing the beauty of goodness in us. Won't you fervently join me in this work, Miss Baldwin?"

She made me no reply, but a mist came over her eyes, and I knew that she would help me. After our conversation, I turned my soul with a new vigor to my life-work; a fresh love sprang up for the children; very beautiful it seemed to watch all the souls around me; to believe they were almost unknowingly turning towards the grand accomplishment of their destiny—a higher and better life.

Mr. Bedell occasionally came to see me. One evening

he asked, "Do you know, Kate, the reputation Mr. Henry bears?"

"I presume it is not a very good one," I returned.

"I am almost sorry you live here, dear Kate. Mr. Henry only draws about him dissolute men."

"He never brings them here," I answered. "His wife is a very lovely woman. I am not sorry I live here, I am glad. He is in reality an alien here; the rest of us love each other."

James drew a letter from his pocket. "I inquired for you when I went to the post-office."

"Why didn't you give it to me before?" I asked. He was just going away.

"I feared you would not appreciate my company with that in your possession," he answered, laughing. "Good night."

The letter was from Grace. I read—

"Dear Kate,—I have written news and commonplaces in all my letters so far—now I *will* say a few words relative to myself—I will speak from my 'innermost,' whether you will or no. I *must* speak, or I shall give way. I am so wretched! how can I bear it? how can I resign the joy that seemed almost my own? Oh, Kate! I never told you *how* I had learned to love again; how deeply, oh! how unwisely, I fear. Yes, I can simply die—die slowly. I have not the same vitality to overcome, that I had once. I do not murmur; it is right, beloved Kate, all right—yes, I can submit myself to my irrevocable destiny now as I could not once, but I suffer nevertheless. My heart turns with most agonized yearning to the object of my love—I cannot tear it away from him—I cannot give him up; and yet, my Kate, he does not come to me, he turns upon me no longer the looks that drew my soul to him—the looks that robbed me of my

self and gave me to him. I never *can* divorce my heart from his, for he is pure and good—he is worthy, and more than worthy, of all my reverent homage; if he were not, then might I some time hope to be enfranchised. Dear Kate, I know that he sought and loved me once—I *know* it; oh! can it be so easy to break the spell with him? I have feared that he thinks I am not all he thought—perhaps I am not all he sought in a wife. *Can I have mistaken his feelings?* This idea has rolled upon me with a fearful weight, pressing the breath out of my heart, as the car of Juggernaut crushes the life out of those over whom it passes. Perchance he has heard the stories that Benzoni has circulated among his acquaintance. That miserable Benzoni! how did I ever love him? how invest him with a glory and kingliness that never crowned other mortals? Surely it is but just that there should be another world to explain the deceptions of this; a place where mortals cannot refrain from throwing off their masks. I have learned that Mr. Benzoni has subtilely spread among his acquaintance a report, not only of Judith's death, but of my engagement to him. You know his friends are not ours, and the story may have reached the ears of *one* in whom I had placed perfect trust, because I hoped he knew me too well to doubt me under any circumstances. It does not belong to me to free myself from unjust suspicions in his eyes: if he had declared his love, then the door would be open for an explanation. I see him in the presence of others; this cannot be avoided; but he does not come near me, or allow his eyes to fall on me. I have not seen Mr. Benzoni since we met in the summer-house; he has made many useless attempts to speak with me. In fact, Kate, I have remained a prisoner at home through fear of meeting him. I encountered him once in the street: I was near Miss Cardover's house. I hastened forward, and entered before he reached me. You cannot imagine how this undignified

pursuit on his part excites my contempt. Love, true, noble love, arises from a harmony of thought and feeling; it cannot be bought by exertion. It was strange how I loved him: very strange, when we were so totally unlike; but I invested him with all the beautiful qualities capable of winning my admiration, and so I worshipped my ideal under the belief that he was its actual.

"Sometimes my soul melts into the tender dreams, the mellowed glories that might, and do rarely irradiate passages of human life, then I would drive away the grim and sorrowful that is allotted to each one, and say with closed eyes, 'Oh, give me these heavenly dreams!' But it is well: I would not, if I could, take my earthly fate from the hands of Providence—I desire to acquiesce. I know indeed that the night cometh, but upon its steps, the morning. Yet I sometimes grow very weary in keeping up my hope in this practical world—sometimes it seems as if life is only one long prayer for patience. I am trying to cast myself into a holier world of love—trying to look upon my fellows with eyes like to those that bend down on us from above.

"Perhaps I shall have happier tidings to communicate in my next. I hope so. Don't let this gloomy letter sadden you, because we both believe, dear Kate, that suffering is a winged angel to link our hearts to heaven. Therefore rejoice for me, although I am not *now* able to rejoice for myself. Are you happy, dear, in your new home? Our hearthstone is surrounded by peaceful hearts. Dear John is growing quite gallant to Mary! It would do your heart good to hear her laugh sometimes. You know we used in old times to wish she would occasionally have a nonsensical mood as we did. She does sometimes now. She is growing youthful, and I am growing wise—I wont say old. They all send a vast deal of love. Your loving

"GRACE."

This letter brought back in a flood-tide the dream in which I had sometimes lived. The words of Grace's letter, "Can it be that I have mistaken his feelings?" thrilled me with the strangest hope—the saddest fear: Oh, sometimes I *had* thought that in Pliny's eyes and voice there dwelt an expression and accent that did not belong to friendship merely. Poor Grace! how selfish was the joy with which I read those words; how self-reproachful the next thought. I hated myself for that joy, but I could do nothing but turn away from the world of thoughts that rushed over me; there was a torrent on each side flowing in. A beautiful light, a glorious joy!—then, with the next thought, such an intense pity for Grace, such a feeling of humiliation over myself, that I could even transiently be happy in what caused her suffering. Wearied with this self-conflict, I took a book and strove to read, but I did not comprehend the words; then I read aloud, determined to scatter my thoughts; in this I succeeded, and a measure of quietness stole over me.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mrs. Henry was ill and low-spirited; she sent for me to sit with her as her sister had gone to the city. I went to her room, and saw her sitting wearily in her arm chair: she looked at me with a kind of yearning, pitiful look, as if she wished she could be comforted. She held out her hand, and for the first time, drew me down and kissed me.

"Shall I sit on this little cricket at your feet?" I asked.

"Yes, do so," she returned.

"And shall I tell you, you must not give way to dejection when we all love you so much," I pursued, looking in her sweet eyes.

"Do you?"

"Yes, indeed; so don't look on the dark side."

"There is no bright side for me, Miss Hamilton." Then, as if she feared she had betrayed her secret sorrow, she added, "You know if one's health is wretched, nothing else can compensate for the loss."

"No, certainly not."

I half thought the poor wife's heart ached to pour out its anguish to me, but she was silent. "Let me read to you," I said; "where is 'Yeast?' its dark pictures will make our home seem brighter. What should we do if we could not find fresh life in books? Shall I read?" Minnie consented.

and I went into the sitting-room to look for the book—I left the door partly open; there was a door leading into Mrs. Henry's room from the hall. At that door I heard her husband's voice, saying, as he opened it,

"Good evening, Madam!" in a hard, cold tone, that must have fallen upon his wife's weary heart like a knife-stroke.

"O, Philip," she answered, with mingled entreaty and timidity, "*can* you leave me now?"

He whistled and closed the door. I supposed he had entered the room with his wife, and I hastened into the hall to go up stairs that I might not hear their conversation. I met him almost face to face, as he came forward towards the front door. A smile came instantly to his lips, the old, handsome, fascinating smile; but oh! how it had changed to me. I felt sure that he did not suspect I had heard his cold words to poor Minnie. He extended both hands, and said in a frank, kindly way, (or such it would once have seemed,) "Will you bid me good-bye, little lady?"

"Good bye!" I said, passing by him, without appearing to notice his outstretched hands. I heard him utter, "*confounded* little prude!"

"Miss Hamilton!" he called, as I was ascending the stairs, "I think I heard you speak of a French work you would like to read, the other day."

"Well!"

"I can obtain it for you at Baltimore."

"Thank you! it is too expensive for me to buy!"

"I should be happy to present it to you, if you will allow me."

"No," I said, shaking my head.

"Why? you would not refuse it from any one else!"

"I would rather not be under obligations to Mr. Henry!" I answered, coloring. A black cloud of anger lowered over his face: he bowed, with a bitter smile. I hastened up stairs,

and saw him enter the carriage which stood at the door. Jep was arranging something about the horses in his usual slow way before getting in. Mr. Henry caught the whip, and gave him a blow across his face, which made him spring from his feet.

"Get in, you villain, and drive like the devil!" he commanded.

"Jep obeyed, but I saw a streak of blood where the passionate blow had fallen. I went down to Mrs. Henry. Still her pale face lay back against the chair; tears were slowly trickling over it. She was of a childlike nature, and I dared caress her, forgetting that I was not the elder. After very wise advice, I wiped away her tears, and read to her. When Miss Baldwin returned with Mr. Bedell, whom she had met in her pedestrianizing in the city, Minnie had smiles for her. Jessie took tea in her mother's room: we caught the sound of their chat, as we sat at our own tea-table in the dining-room. Miss Baldwin was in excellent spirits, and so was James. The latter seemed so good, and pure and noble;—so interesting, compared with the few gentlemen I met. I enjoyed his visits so heartily, and looked forward to them as the brightest event of the week. I called him "brother," and sometimes he said "sister," but when he did, he looked into my eyes inquiringly, and smiled.

We sat sewing, Miss Baldwin and I, in the school-room one afternoon. "Are you engaged to Mr. Bedell, Miss Hamilton?" she asked quietly.

"No! he is only a sort of adopted brother!"

"You expect to be engaged to him some time or other?" she pursued.

"O no! never!"

"Are you in earnest?"

"Yes, I am."

"Then you are a dunce!"

"I reckon not!" I answered, laughing. "Mr. Bedell knows my sentiments, and visits here as a friend or relative would."

"You are mistaken. I suppose you will be foolish enough to trust your happiness to a man's keeping some day; you will never find a better than Mr. Bedell. I speak to you as a sincere friend. If I were wholly selfish, I should advise you never to change your present home."

"Mr. Bedell will never be more to me than he is now!"

"Then you are not acting towards him as you ought. You encourage him!"

"But he is a very dear friend. I could not bear to have him stop coming here."

"You ought to make up your mind not to flirt!"

"I have not intended to. I have thought of this matter, and imagined I was very conscientious."

"Humph!" said Miss Baldwin as she rose, and went away. I laid my face down on the desk before me, and cried with my whole heart. Miss Baldwin was right. I knew that James loved me. But how to give up his friendship, lonely as I was? There was a rap at the school-room door. I started to my feet. James himself entered.

"I thought you said, come in!" he exclaimed, surprised at the plight in which he found me. "Homesick?"

"Yes! and not to be seen!" I answered, throwing my apron over my face. "Please excuse me, unless you have business to speak about."

"You can't hear with your face covered."

"Then delay your message."

"Will you visit some paintings with me to-morrow evening."

"I cannot to-morrow evening!"

"I shall not be able to go again in a week."

"I cannot promise to go at all James!"

"Why not, Kate?" he asked in a disappointed, but most gentle tone.

"I think it would not be best."

"You call me brother, dear Kate; why not allow me to wait on you, as a brother would?"

I dropped my apron and said, "because, James!"

He understood me, and grew pale, while his eyes rested on me. "Forgive me!" I said, as I saw the pain struggling in his heart.

"Am I as dear to you as a brother?" he asked in an accent full of tenderness.

"Yes!"

"Not *dearer*, Kate?"

"No! good-bye! Don't speak again," I uttered with difficulty.

"Kate, this is not a 'good-bye.' It must not, cannot be!" He took my hand and led me to a seat; he spoke rapidly. "You do not understand yourself. You do not know the love or nature of him you cast away. Think of the wide, wide world!—you have neither father, nor mother, sister or brother. It is a hard, pitiless world, and men and women gather their treasures about them, and forget the yearning heart of the stranger. You and I are strangers; you are the world to me; I would be father, mother, sister, brother,—all to you. There are cold, cruel hearts hedging in every path, and you will meet them, and cry in vain for one true breast to which you may fly. I am not vain beyond the average, Kate; but a truer spirit will never kneel, and ask you to share its all. Every hope, every dream shall be open to you even as my soul is open to God. I am a plain, unhandsome fellow, but I have an honest spirit, and a strong arm to shield you, Kate! Am I cast off?"

I wept passionately; with utter abandonment I saw myself indeed cast upon the wide, wide world, torn from one

who drew my soul to him with magnetic power, and yet who apparently heeded not its helplessness, its sunshine, or its anguish. I felt for James the same intense pity with which I regarded myself.

"Kate, am I cast off?" he repeated.

"Yes!" I rose as I said it.

He started back, and turned to leave the room; but again he came to my side, and said with gentle firmness, "I will not take your answer now. Think about it. It is destiny!—it *will* be. I will come again in a week. Good-bye until then!" he pressed my hand, and touched his lips to my forehead, and his earnest eyes dwelt on mine until the door closed. It seemed to me at that moment, that it *was* destiny, and I stood dreamily on the spot where he had left me, my tears stayed, my heart beating quietly,—yet it seemed as if some great splendor I had ever expected had rolled into a dark tomb, where lay buried halcyon fancies, and sweet, exhulting hopes. Life, beautiful life, had lost its sunshiny glory: I must bow my head, and yield now to a daily routine of commonplace affairs, never daring to dwell on what I had dreamed, of fair and blissful. Alas! to give up without having tasted one draught of life's best wine; without having seen one flower of joy bloom in celestial freshness: without having seen the sun arise, and flood my soul with a moon-tide brilliance: without having known the true significance of youth. Miss Bremer says, "And if this season of life's bloom last but a morning, it is still beautiful to have enjoyed it: with the bosom bathed in love and spring to have tasted the glory of life. This ruddiness of morning casts a bewitching splendor on the whole of after-life. One bears the heavy days of earth much more readily when the heart has once revelled in the fulness of happiness." A profound gloom settled over my heart. I writhed under my destiny, and yet felt that plain, common sense indicated a marriage with

James, as a sensible thing. As he had said, I could never expect a truer spirit to come to me. The world was large, and I was an orphan. I was weary now of standing alone, and longed for a strong, calm heart to direct my own. I wanted one whom I could look up to, and trust; one who would say to me, "This is right," or "you are wrong," when I wavered in duty. Marriage had ever been to me so holy and beautiful—I had never even thought it a possibility that I could marry one whose intellectual and spiritual nature was not exquisitely adapted to my own. When I thought of James as a husband there arose an instant consciousness of unfitness; and yet he was very dear to me. I sat down and pondered the subject after James had left me. Was I willing to leave my free girlhood—my independence? had I sufficient love to bear the great suffering that accompanies the name of wife? Had I sufficient humility to tell him my heart story?—for I could not yield my hand without utter frankness. To these queries, my heart said "no." But as I gave him up in thought, I said, "It is a most sweet incense, the love of a noble human heart—how shall I break this strange spell that he has wrapt around me? Who will ever love me again? Pliny?—no! if he had loved me, he would have told me so. Grace's next letter will tell me they are friends again. And even if it should be that Pliny should ever care for me, I could not be won merely for the asking—I *would* not accept a diluted love—I would turn away from him until I found that his love quite equalled my own. But oh! what wild and foolish dreamings! I started from the bench where I sat: the mail had come in. I had a letter. I felt that it would give me tidings that would go down to my very soul. It was from Grace. I lifted my prayerful glance to heaven before reading it; I pressed my hand upon my heart as if to strengthen it, for a wild combat had arisen within me. Every selfish impulse sprung like a

giant to its work—I entreated with a mad imploringness that the knell of *my* happiness might not be sounded—poor Grace! how she would have grieved to have known that I loved my own joys so much better than hers. This day I had seen a vision of my probable life, and I turned away from it in such a chill despair; how *could* I part from the picture that had been clasped to my soul in girlish hope and joy! But the letter! I said with blind, cold faith, "Thy will be done!" and then I broke the seal and read—aye! I read it all through, although the first words assured me that God had smitten my selfish prayers with refusal, and that he had crowned a nobler nature with his blessing. The letter had no date, and ran thus:—

"Kate! he loves me!—yes! he loves me! The very heavens seem radiant with the words; every sweet sound seems to echo them—I catch them sleeping or waking. I repeat them softly to myself, while they create around me an atmosphere of bliss and enchantment. My soul is flooded with love—and pride. Yes! now I understand what pride is, in all its vastness and sweetness—and I would not be less proud than I am. Were the universe laid at my feet, and were all the best and bravest among men, kneeling there, the emotion would be paltry, compared with the triumph that swells my heart. *He loves me!* and God has given me more than the universe. *He loves me!* and I defy the universe, and time, and grief and fate. *He loves me!* and I shall sleep for ever beneath the smile of heaven—never fearing, never doubting, whatever blows may fall. The diamond-life of eternity waits for us,—and let God give us what food He will,—let Him lead us through cold, mystic paths, if He will. Hope shall say, 'All is well!' Gratitude shall kneel; and faith shall sing 'a new song unto the Lord.' I have heard it said that Love and Suffering are sisters; that he who loves, trembles. But ah! this soul-

filling love has enabled me to comprehend the Deity: I can look up with smiles under any destiny, for I feel that the God who has created me with such immense capacities for happiness,—who has overflowed my soul with this lavish richness, must be ever giving a divine increase, albeit clouds may intervene between the human eye and the All-seeing one. If I do not turn away from the good, it cannot turn away from me. At night I kneel with clasped hands and streaming eyes, and pray to become worthy of this lot; pray for a heart to turn with fresh devotion and self-forgetfulness to the beloved souls wandering in cold and darkness, yet capable of this same splendid glory. Weary hearts that sigh,

> 'It is this niggard halfness that turns my heart to stone,
> 'Tis the cup seen, not tasted, that makes the infant moan.'

A celestial freshness from within the door of heaven is continually wafted through my spirit. It needs no argument to convince me that I have found my twin-spirit, and that separation would be impossible. It is this conviction of indissolubility, that thrills me with the song 'Eureka.' How strange seems the contrast between this and my former love. Madam De Stael says, 'It is not first love that is ineffaceable: we love then, because our affections crave an object.' In that wild, tumultuous love, I had always the conviction that my aspirations bore me above Giovanni, but in the present case, there is no hope, or upward dream, or expansive thought that does not meet an instant oneness. But I shall tire you. By the way, Benzoni went to Europe weeks ago. Your last letters have sounded sadly to me. Ah! do not doubt the coming brightness. You trust in God, and He has created our natures. We have not the right to fear. Darling, I feel as if I could bear you on my heart right up to heaven. Will you let me tell

you, dear Katy, that sometimes there are sentences in your letters that do not sound so frank and warm as they might,—occasionally there is a bitterness, a vehement resistance to the God-given present, that makes me weep over the injury Katy is doing herself. Give up your will, and *choose* the paths of God's appointment, or it will be a long and weary way to your angelic home. This does not come gracefully from the lips of one so happy, and yet I know you will bear the truth. Ah! remember that the divine blessing fell upon one who 'loved much.' Don't you love me as you used to, Katy? Sometimes I fancy that southern home has chilled your heart; and ere I have ceased wondering at it, another letter comes steeped in warmest love, and bearing all the glow of our first friendship. But, my dear, I feel that you are not altogether *at one* with your lot. I know that the years will bring you into beauty, clearness, and repose; so have patience with the present, remembering that 'all things work together for good to them that serve God.' Your devoted

"GRACE."

I finished the letter, and slowly laid it on the glowing fire—"Thus, my God," I cried, "thus burn out the dross from my nature." And very quietly I sat down—what difference did it make? I deserved it—yes, I needed it very much. I went to setting copies; but that did not stop thought, and a strange darkness came over my sight. I did not faint, I never could, but I laid my head down on the desk, and my heart ticked regularly, beat, beat, beat—how slowly it beat, and through what suffering each beat came. Poor James! what a miserable being he had turned to for happiness—weak and weary, I felt now as if I could rest on his love; but as this thought came, an accusing angel sternly whispered, "This too is selfishness only—you would exist on his strength, and be a miserable burden to him—you desire

his love, and cannot give a return." I listened to the stern angel, and I only answered, "O, for strength!"

Two days had passed. Hurrying feet passed to and fro in the house. Jessie broke into my room, drowned in tears.

"A little babe! but mother is dying!" she said.

A strange terror made my heart stand still a moment. "Who said she was dying, Jessie?"

"Aunt Lucy! she dressed us children that we might go in the room, if mother asked for us. But Aunt Addie sent me away from the door!" And Jessie flung herself upon the floor, in convulsions of tears and despair. I hurried down stairs, and met Miss Baldwin carrying a bundle of flannel: she placed it in my arms, and whispered with stiff, pallid lips, "Take care of it: keep it in the school-room awhile, where it is warm. The noise troubles Minnie!"

"How is she?" I asked.

Miss Baldwin only shook her head, and burst into tears. She wrung my hand, and at last exclaimed, "If she dies, I'll murder that man. She has no hope to keep her up!—to leave her at this time! She will not take any thing!—she cares for nothing. Her mind wanders; she calls, 'Philip,' whenever her faint lips can form a sound. How *can* God allow one demon thus to crush another soul and body? an innocent like her?"

"She might have died, if Mr. Henry had been ever so kind!"

"No, she has been growing weaker, year by year, until her frame is broken, as well as her heart. She has no disease to fight against. She might have been spared to us many years, if the slow canker of grief had not exhausted her vitality. But take the babe up stairs. It is a girl, poor thing!"

I bore the little one to the school-room, and sat down by the fire. It slept! oh! endless destiny that stretched before

its unconsciousness! how many tears it must shed! how many struggles must rend its heart. Alas! it could not retreat from life. Jessie crept to me, and gazed upon her sister, then she laid her head against me, sighing. My own tears dropped; life seemed so heavy, so bitter, so full of pains. How could I bear it to the end? How brave physical woe, as well as mental sorrow?

I must give James an answer ere long. What should it be? It was a drear, December day. I looked into the leaden clouds: with that same cold gray, my once careless heart was shrouded now. The rain fell slowly; a drizzling mist was over the river, and over the distant woods. I could see the road, where I sat: the bare branches of the trees overhung it. Rain, and mud, and miserable negroes were presented to my vision. Never had I been in such a cowardly frame of mind. Jessie started at every sound, hoping she might be admitted to her mother's room.

"What shall we do?" she implored, looking up at me with folded hands. "I feel so unhappy. Can't you comfort me? Will mother go to heaven?"

Poor Jessie! She prepared a little bed for the baby, formed of two chairs, and as many pillows.

"Let us kneel down here by the baby, darling," I said, "and pray to God to comfort us, and to bless your poor mother."

She bowed her head, with a fresh gush of tears; then we softly repeated a prayer for the sick, which the children used when any of the family were ill. Jessie clasped her arms around my neck, and laid her head on my breast.

"Jessie!" I whispered, "do you know that God would not let us have any pain, if we would be good without it? Do you know that you must be a guardian angel to this little baby, so when she grows up you may lead her by the hand to heaven? Do you know that you ought to dedicate yourself to

God on this first day of her life, and implore Him with your whole heart to make you good and pure, that you may not teach this dear innocent how to sin? This is a solemn day; an hour you ought never to forget! My darling, you will not forget your duty to this little angel?"

"Never! oh! never! if God will help me!" she answered, raising her eyes upward with a holy look. "Read to me from the Bible—won't you?"

I read the seventy-first psalm, and love and courage rose with thankfulness to God. "There's more beyond" this pain, was the strengthening thought that rose within me. I will not shrink from destiny, be it bright or dark. I will clasp it to my breast, and strike from the darkness sparks of heavenly fire. I will turn away from myself, and study how to add to others' joys. But with this thought came a fresh pang. How to encounter cares and responsibilities, when my heart was dying? The suffering of Mrs. Henry had made me start back from the thought of marriage. The pleasure with which I had regarded James, vanished when I saw that not repose alone, but perhaps excruciating suffering might be required of me, as his wife. He seemed suddenly changed from a delightful friend into a stern Mentor, who pointed out the hard places of life, and bade me take up my cross, and walk therein without weakness or wavering. And yet I felt that after a long, long while I should love him as he deserved. "It is destiny,—it *will* come!" the words rang in my ears, and it seemed as if that calm voice had decided my fate.

The babe cried. I awoke from my revery, half smiling at the weakness with which I had pronounced the fiat of a strong man's will, my destiny.

The babe cried pitifully, incessantly; it seemed in great pain. I walked the floor, looking down into the little disfigured face with an infinite pity; I held it close to my

aching heart, and thought, "Poor little one, you did not ask a heritage of pain;" but still the wail went on.

"Jessie, what *shall* we do?" I asked in deep despair. "Go to the shanty, and bring nurse Belinda."

Jessie obeyed, and I continued my walk, mentally saying, "Can I ever be Mrs. Bedell?—ever have wretched health like Mrs. Henry?—ever have wailing children, sick children, cross children? Can I watch through weary nights, and have distracting headaches next day? and James coming in, thinking what a wretched home he has got? Can I bear all these wearing, terrible cares, without a surpassing love to sustain me?" The bright side of the picture never occurred to me.

Jessie returned with Belinda, who rejoiced in being the mother of an ebon baby. She took the infant in her motherly arms, and I went down stairs. I met Aunt Lucy in the sitting-room. "May I see Mrs. Henry?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, Miss," she returned, softly opening the bedroom door, and giving me admission. The room appeared dark at first. Miss Baldwin stood leaning against the foot of the bed, gazing upon Minnie, while great tears rolled unheeded over her stern face. I turned to the invalid. She lay in her wan helplessness upon the pillow, her white lids half drooping over her blue eyes; the low, uneven breath fluttered from her parted lips. She looked indeed as if death were wooing her. The doctor stood by, and kept his finger on her pulse. In my heart I felt that it would be sweet thus to see her pass away to the tender ones, who would take her to their hearts, recognizing the grace upon her brow. Her child-heart was made for a love sweet as angel's love. The doctor sat down. I went and stood by her; she did not move, or raise her eyes, yet there was a slight motion of the lips. I bent my ear. The exhausted breath strove to give utterance to "Philip." Alas! were the truth

of that wife's history realized, how soon would the mantle of fascination drop from her gay and handsome husband, as he bowed over a girlish face, and spoke words of delicate praise in his rich, kind voice: a voice to win trust from the unpractised heart. I could not but think Mrs. Henry would live—live, still to weep and despair.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The struggle was over. The die was cast. I could not consent to place my hand within that of James. How apparently slight a thing will alter the whole current of our lives. If Mrs. Henry's illness had not awakened me to a perception of the cares and sufferings of married life, I should undoubtedly have been the wife of James. As it was, it was very hard to cast away his love. I dreaded the hour of his coming. I dreaded to quell in his eye the look of flashing hope and joy that had so often met me—I dreaded to see the sunlight die out of his face. There had been a spell in his joyous spirits, a thrill in his glance, a volume of feeling in his expressive face. I had never had lovers, or I should sooner have realized that my pleasure in his friendship warranted him in believing he might hope for more. How I wished he might still come to see me—how many times I had turned involuntarily to meet with a smile his glance, because an intuitive feeling had assured me that it would give him joy. But now principle forbade any more kindness—I was careless and ignorant no longer. I must resign love, friendship, all that makes life beautiful. The next day after I had received Grace's letter, I had gone to the city with the children. I met James in a store. His look of infinite tenderness awoke a thrill of joy in my gloomy

spirit. He advanced to meet me and retreated, and then, perhaps reading my feelings in my face, he came forward. I gave him my hand with drooping eyes. I thought then that perhaps I might be his wife.

I sat writing in the school-room. I was startled by James, and yet I expected him, for the time had come. He entered without rapping, I rose! How my heart beat! I stood still. He met me with a look of most brilliant joy. I never saw a more glorious light in any countenance; it sought my face with the warm earnestness that seemed to dream of an answering feeling. He did not speak; he offered his hand. I did not take it. I only said a slight "Good evening," with tremulous lips, then turned away to dispose of my writing-materials, and to gain the mastery of myself. He took a seat, and for some time was perfectly silent.

"My God! you are marble!" he said at last. The extinguished light in his eyes made them look as if a dark circle was around them: the blood had receded from his face and lips. I felt that it had also left my own. Cold and stony as death I felt, as I gazed upon his bowed head resting on his hands. I knew then, how my careless indulgence in present pleasure had been a crime; my cordial welcome, a wicked thing; my smiling glance, a cruel weakness. And over me slowly came the anguish that heaved that noble heart.

"I am answered!" he said, rising and looking at me, yet not with inquiry. He extended his hand, and I gave him mine.

"God bless you always!" he said very gently, and then he left me.

I would have said some kind word, but my heart seemed quietly frozen, and I could not speak. But after he was gone, a torrent of self-reproach rushed over me—a misera-

ble feeling which it seemed as if nothing could expiate. I had been to blame in retaining him as a familiar friend so long. I threw myself on the bed; the long night waned, and no tears came; only through my heart I heard the moans of that crushed spirit, which had turned to me for joy. The knowledge that his misery could not last very long, afforded no relief to my sense of his present condition.

* * * * *

Minnie had dropped away into a soft slumber; it was her first refreshing sleep, and we looked down upon her white face with hope, for we had had terrible fears; the doctor had just told us he had feared her disease would go to the brain, and then if she did not die her reason might not return. Miss Baldwin took the babe, who had been named Ada, and went in the sitting-room. Over her brow for days a gloomy cloud had hung; within her eyes had slept a miserable despair. She did not speak, except when required to do so to any one. She hung over Minnie, as if every sentiment of her being had concentrated into pity and woe. And yet Minnie was coming back to life. I followed her into the sitting-room, and sat down by her. The baby opened her blue eyes innocently, as the violets look up from their lowly bed.

"Let me take her," I said. "I can almost *feel* how near to her the angels are."

Miss Baldwin resigned the child. I looked down in the infant's face, and thought how wide was the contrast between those two lives—the one a dew drop, just born, the other a rushing river, chafing its way beneath a starless sky, over grim, uneven rocks.

"I wish she had never been born," said Miss Baldwin, her face sinking into her hands, her elbows on her knees.

"Why?" I asked.

"For the same reason that makes me curse the day of

my own birth. Because life has no rest; we are led on from one petty misery to another; from one soul-consuming struggle to another. It is *all* weariness! Show me one human being who has escaped the rack, after waking up from the ignorance of childhood!"

"Perhaps I could not point out one; but who would be annihilated?"

"I would."

"Oh! can you not find any brightness any where under the sun?"

"No, only darkness yawning beneath me, around me, above me—there is no God, or He is more cruel than His miserable creatures."

"But there *is* a God, and if the world shook and reeled from beneath the foot of the Christian, the exulting certainty that God upheld him could not fail. Many griefs there are, but none like a loss of faith in God. The sheet anchor of man's very being, is thus torn away from him."

"How do you know there is a God?"

"Because I *cannot* know otherwise. My mind refuses to conceive a different thought. I feel the sunshine that comes from Him. I live in His breath. Faith in Him, fills existence with a glory that proves His power. Faith in Him, unravels the bitter mysteries that beset us, and sheds a clear light upon our path, when outward calamities would shroud us in darkness."

"I wish I could feel this faith. You do not prove to me yet that there is a God."

"I cannot do so by argument, but I can tell you how to prove it to yourself."

"How?"

"Your life is worth nothing to you now, if you are willing to be annihilated. Are you willing to make it of worth to yourself, by any effort or struggle, however desperate?"

"The spirits of evil have been struggling within me, until I have no strength. I cannot make any effort. I have reached the climax of despair. I want to sleep and die."

"Then you have reached the moment to expect something new. Set your foot down upon this unbelief, which brings more frightful agony than any misfortune which has ever overtaken you."

"How can I?"

"You have taken one step towards expelling the enemy, by speaking of your feelings. If you become willing to devote your life to others' good, you will believe in God—if you learn to forgive and pity, you will believe in God."

She turned her eyes upon me with a sudden gleam, saying sternly, "Do you mean that I ought to forgive Philip Henry?"

"Yes!"

"Then the matter is settled. I want no such doctrine."

After a pause I said, "It is well that man is not left to the mercy of man; well that God does not turn from us with the loathing with which we turn from our sin-stricken fellows."

"Are you going to church?" she asked abruptly.

"Shall I?" I asked, my heart sinking with pain at the little heed she gave to my words.

"I think you had better. Will you take Fred and Nellie? they are so noisy. Tony shall drive you."

I prepared for church, and waited on the porch with the children for Tony to come with the carriage. It was a cloudy, cheerless day; the gray sky seemed to hang low over the earth, as if to shut out from human thought all view of the azure fields and the life-giving sun far above us. Tony's dark, yet ever bright face was lighted up with a dazzling smile of good humor. It shone across my heart a moment,

as he handed us into the carriage. Who shall tell the worth of cheery looks and smiles, and who should grudge them, when they may shed a momentary brightness upon an aching heart? We did not go to the church we usually attended in the city. Mr. Bedell was in the habit of going there, and I could not bear to meet him. We entered a stone church near by. A cold light shone through the stained windows, and fell upon the congregation; the organ poured forth a low, sad harmony, in keeping with the cold light within me and without me. We took our places in a shaded, quiet place; the old clergyman arose: his locks were thin and scattered; his broken voice had neither strength nor comfort to offer. He preached upon the doctrine of "election." I listened until I grew perfectly miserable. Hearts were gathered there, pining for the spirit-stirring sound of the gospel—for words of strength to help them in treading courageously over the rough ways of life. They needed a glorious motto from the pages of revelation, that might ring trumpet-like on the spirit's ear, and inspire the tardy hand to buckle on the armor of salvation, and fight the good fight of faith. The old man sat down; a younger man who sat in the pulpit with him arose and spoke ten minutes. He gave bread to the people: he belonged to the one great, universal church; he preached the gospel to every creature. I thanked him in my heart for his words.

It was raining heavily when we emerged into the lobby of the church. Tony carried the children to the carriage. I looked over the faces surrounding me, and met the glance of Mr. Bedell. He bowed without suffering his eyes to meet mine. He was at my side in a moment.

"Will you walk down the steps with me?" he asked, raising his umbrella. I went.

"Didn't you like what was last said?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, but no smile came to his stern face.

He handed me into the carriage in silence, bowed again without suffering his eye to meet mine, and left us. I could not bear that the eyes which had beamed on me so tenderly, should grow chilling and careless in their glance—that his warm heart should grow heedless of my fate. I selfishly wept to keep the incense, although my wayward spirit would not be bound; could not yet resign the rainbow I could never reach; ever it dissolved from sight, but its remembrance held me in thrall, and prophesied another.

Soon after reaching home, I went down to the sitting-room. To my surprise Mr. Henry sat there. He nodded to me carelessly, in a manner quite at variance with the usual chivalrous courtesy of his demeanor. I guessed that I had fallen from the pedestal, and had become a very ordinary young person.

"When did you get home?" I asked.

"This morning!" he replied, tipping back his chair against the wall.

"Have you seen Mrs. Henry?" I continued, knowing what an event his return was to her.

"Certainly!"

I went to the table for a book; by some means he had always found out my favorite authors, and they were strewed about the house. Every few days a new book had caught my eye. Frequently passages were marked therein. These books Mr. Henry had been in the habit of recommending to me. As I was rummaging about for a volume I had laid down in the morning, Mr. Henry said,

"Do I see you in good health, Miss Prim?"

I looked at him a moment, half angry that he had discontinued his deferential bearing.

"You have that felicity, sir!" I responded.

"Saintly as ever, Miss Prim?"

"More so, I think!"

"Indeed?" I suppose you pray seven times a day now, don't you?"

"I do when I feel like it!"

"Do you pray for me?"

"Sometimes."

"What do you do that for, Miss Prim?"

"Because I fear you do more evil than good in the world."

He gave a short laugh, and said, "What do you say when you pray for me?"

"I pray that God will put it in your heart to be more worthy of your wife." I was half frightened as this speech escaped me.

An angry spot flamed in Mr. Henry's cheeks; an imperious fire darted from his eye. "That is my affair!" he exclaimed, with the domineering expression I had seen him wear towards the servants when they offended him. It struck a defiant vein in my spirit: I laughed bitterly and replied,

"When a man holds a knife at his wife's heart, he thinks it *his* affair, but lookers-on entertain a different sentiment, and God sends him to judgment."

Mr. Henry bowed haughtily and slowly, and took up a paper to read. I glanced out of the window, and saw Miss Harriet Thorne coming up the front steps: she and Egbert had become adoringly attached. She came in, but as she did not see her lover, she turned to Mr. Henry with great apparent delight. The red spot was yet on his cheek, and his handsome lips were closed firmly as he looked from his paper. I went into Mrs. Henry's room for half an hour. When I passed through the sitting-room again, Mr. Henry was all fascination, and courteousness and wit to Miss Harriet. I thought he took a malicious pleasure in showing me with what merry satisfaction she talked with him, and in ap-

pearing himself captivated with her pretty face. I went to my room and read and wrote.

"At the tea-table, Mr. Henry said, "What a beautiful complexion Miss Harriet has."

Egbert looked up delighted. "I never saw one like it," he answered.

"You never did?" retorted Mr. Henry gruffly. "Boys of your age should find something to do besides admiring pretty girls. I shall send you to New Haven to complete your studies."

Egbert colored, and looked very much dissatisfied.

"If your complexion were a little fairer, and your eyes a little bluer, Miss Hamilton," said Mr. Henry, "you might almost be taken for an elder sister of Miss Harriet's."

"Indeed! I have also been taken for Mr. Henry's daughter."

"Yes," said Egbert, "I have been asked a great many times if Miss Hamilton and I were brother and sister."

Two weeks after this conversation, Egbert went to Yale College. A half hour after he had gone, Miss Thorne burst into my room overcome with grief; she flung her arms around my neck, crying very desperately.

"Poor Eg.! how he did hate to go," she sighed. "When shall I ever see him again? O, dear!"

"Suppose we sit down and compose our minds," I suggested, trying to look serious. She thought her grief so sincere, when I thought it so superficial, I could hardly refrain from laughing at her tears.

"You good-for-nothing, heartless thing! You don't care a fig," she said, catching a look at my face, and flirting herself off into the school room.

"Why, Miss Thorne, you can't expect me to go into hysterics too!" I said, deprecatingly, standing in the door of my room. "Egbert is a real good, kind fellow."

"I almost wish I had married him. Don't tell, Miss Hamilton, for the world, but he wanted me to go to S—— and be married privately. I shall be so lonely. Well, it will all go in a lifetime, I suppose. I'd rather have beaux than get married; it's more fun. He got down on his knees before me. I should have gone, if he hadn't done that: just then, it darted through my head, that he wouldn't kneel to me after we were married, so I thought I would make him dance attendance on my whims a while longer." Miss Thorne's spirits brightened. She continued, "I have teased that fellow almost to death. Sometimes I'd pretend I didn't care for him, you know."

"Perhaps you didn't," I suggested.

"Indeed, I did. It almost killed me to part with him this morning. See there!" She held out her hand to show me a diamond ring, which Egbert had given her. "Isn't it pretty? Oh! I'm going home to tease father to let me spend a week in S——. How do you stand being cooped up in a school room so? I should fly!" She threw on her bonnet and accordingly flew home.

When she returned from S——, a week later, she came to tell me the news.

"There's a letter from Eg.," she said, holding it up, so that I could see the superscription.

"Ah! is he well?" I asked.

"Yes," she answered carelessly. "I shan't answer it, would you?"

"I would, certainly, if I were engaged to him."

"He ought not to expect that I should bother myself with his letters every week. He can write just the same, if he wants to."

"But you ought to break the engagement, if you cannot treat him with ordinary respect. Don't torture him with suspense for months. Do you intend to marry him?"

"I don't know."

"You ought to find out."

"Oh, pshaw! don't preach. I liked him when he was here, and kept telling me how beautiful I was, and how he adored every little white finger, and how graceful I was, and how I sang sweeter than the birds, and all that; but as soon as he went away, I found I didn't care a straw whether I ever saw him again or not."

"And you intend to let matters run on in this way?"

"Yes; why not? Very likely I may have him in the end, if I can't do better. I want more than one string to my bow. He's real soft, don't you think so? He's one of the kind that will hang on for ever."

"And you abuse his constant nature, because he has little pride or spirit?"

"Yes, ma'am, I do. I wish he were more like his father."

"I don't."

"I'm coming over this evening to play backgammon with Mr. Henry."

"Did he ask you to do so?"

"Yes, he did."

"I think Mrs. Henry would rather you would not play with him, or receive his compliments with apparent pleasure."

"Oh, dear! I'll do as I please about that."

"But, Hattie, if you were a wife, and loved your husband, I'm sure it would break your heart to see young girls encourage his attentions, and draw away all his love from you. When Mrs. Henry is so weak and ill, you ought not to give her any pangs."

"Fiddlestick! she needn't be jealous."

"She would not be without the greatest cause. She reads her husband's heart through, and comprehends his every glance. She is so good, so affectionate, so pure-hearted.

Don't make her unhappy. Do let her find a friend in you. I have noticed your flirting with Mr. Henry."

"What's the harm of a little innocent flirting?"

"It is not innocent! It is wicked in this case. Have you not a woman's heart beating within you? Have you no principle, no charity, or chastity of soul?"

"You needn't take it upon yourself to lecture me. It was a condescension in me to offer my friendship to a mere governess."

I laughed and said, "suppose you don't contaminate your little self by remaining here. When you can behave prettily, you may visit me again. It is school time now."

Miss Thorne retreated, turning up her nose in a very dignified manner. I called after her,

"You have dropped your letter, Miss Thorne." I met her half-way with it.

"Good bye!" I said.

"Good bye!"-she returned very stiffly.

In the evening she came over. She was all smiles, and seemed to have no recollection of the morning's dispute. She caught my dress, as I was about leaving the sitting-room, and whispered, "Don't go up stairs; if you do, that horrid old maid will plant herself down here for the evening."

Miss Baldwin was going to bed with a sick headache. I sat down, and took out my work. Mr. Henry had been very attentive to his wife during her illness, always bringing her some delicacy to tempt her appetite, when he went to the city. She came out to dinner upon this day for the first time; her face beamed with smiles. While Mr. Henry and Miss Thorne were arranging their men on the board, I went into Mrs. Henry's room, to see if she were as well as usual, after sitting up so long. Aunt Lucy was arranging her blonde hair with the greatest precision. Mrs. Henry laughed, and said, "Aunt Lucy thinks I am well enough

to see a little more of the world than I saw at dinner, so I am coming out to spend the evening with you."

"Don't Missus look like a lily, Miss?" asked Aunt Lucy, surveying her with pride.

"Yes, she does," I replied, thinking I had never seen her look so very lovely. She wore a light blue silk dressing-gown, girdled at the waist with a cord and tassel. A soft glow tinged her almost transparent cheeks; and her blue eyes beamed with a loving look. I could not forbear kissing her, and contrasting her delicate beauty with the mere physical attractions of Harriet Thorne. I went into the other room, and resumed my seat. Mr. Henry sat directly facing the bedroom door: it opened, and sweet Minnie entered, followed by Aunt Lucy, who drew forward her arm-chair. The look on Mr. Henry's face, I shall never forget. It riveted itself, cold and repelling, upon the timid wife, as if to drive her back. I saw that it drank up her very heart's blood: her eyes dropped, and her cheeks grew white. She sunk in her chair, and placed her hand over her eyes.

"It makes me faint to walk," she said, in a low tone.

Mr. Henry started up, and handed her a glass of water from the table.

"No," she answered, looking up in his face. He resumed his seat, looking very much vexed.

"Take me back, Aunt Lucy," said Minnie gently. Mr. Henry assisted in drawing her into the bedroom. Aunt Lucy had seen the look that greeted her idolized mistress: she rolled up the whites of her eyes, and sighed profoundly.

"Suppose you put the children to bed, Aunt Lucy," I said, "and I will stay with Mrs. Henry awhile."

She left the room. Minnie kept her hand on her forehead. I sat down in a low seat by her, and laid my head on her knee, while I held the little hand that had dropped beside her.

"It is cold to-night," I said, to arouse her from her painful thoughts.

She did not reply, but she gazed down in my face with a stony look: it was not pride; had Minnie been proud by nature, I should have left her alone; but her child-heart clung to others for support.

"Do you feel stronger, dear?" I asked tremblingly, for her look went to my heart like a fearful bolt. She did not speak, but kept gazing at me with that strange, absent expression. I rose and procured from the other room the discarded glass of water.

"Drink this, Mrs. Henry," I said, presenting it to her. She took it, and drank, then she turned her face aside, and kept her eyes fixed on the bed. I sat with her all the evening, and assisted Aunt Lucy in placing her in bed, for she was passive in our hands, and did not seem inclined to make the slightest exertion.

"Massa put her back a week, Miss," whispered Aunt Lucy. I retired to my room with a strange fear at my heart.

"How is Mrs. Henry?" I asked of Miss Baldwin in the morning at breakfast.

"About the same, I imagine," she returned. "I am going to the city to-day, Miss Hamilton. Try to amuse her, will you, when you are out of school?"

"Yes, certainly."

I was hearing the children their morning lessons, when the school-room door softly opened, and Mrs. Henry stepped in, and closed it behind her. Her eyes gleamed unnaturally. She had on the blue dressing gown; her fair hair was all unbound, floating around her: her snowy feet were thrust into embroidered slippers. My very heart died within me. Jessie and Ellen looked from her to me with blanched cheeks and dilated eyes.

"I'm going to tell you all about it!" she said, slowly walking up and down. "That look! did you see it?"

"Wait a moment, Mrs. Henry!" I said. I dismissed the children.

"Sit down now, won't you?" I begged.

"No, I can't!" she answered, continuing her walk. I prevailed on her to let me clothe her feet more warmly, and then she instantly resumed her promenade.

"I thought," she said, "how glad he would be to see the dear babe when he got home. He kissed it, and he kissed me, and said I should soon be well. Sometimes when he came in to see me, I was suffering acute pain, but I never let him know it, because he had once said I was always teasing him with my aches and pains. Oh! many a night I have laid awake, and never for an instant closed my eyes,—thinking I might die before help came, but I knew if I awoke him, how he would speak to me; and I thought it was so hard to make him love me, I would rather die than have him think I was only a trouble to him. Men are so different from us; they don't sympathize with our pains, because they don't have them to bear themselves. I have often wondered why God put all the agony on us. Christ bore all the agony on the cross to redeem mankind, and we have it all, but we don't redeem any one by it." She sat down, and pressed her forehead, while tears fell in floods from her eyes. She looked at me, through the blinding tears.

"Why did God make us with hearts so much more tender than theirs? Was it so that they could kill us a thousand times over? If we should once commit a crime, that they commit a hundred times, we should be turned houseless from the door, and they would bid the world point the finger of scorn at us. Tell me, why is God so unjust?"

"He is not, Minnie, dear!—How beautifully Jessie draws! Here is her last picture! Look!"

She turned an indifferent glance upon it, and resumed the same train of thought. "Yes! God puts us here, the good to receive pain from the bad."

"Does your head ache?" I asked.

"It feels strangely!"

I left her and went in search of Mr. Henry. He sat in the library.

"Well, Miss Prim, what is your will?" he asked, turning around, and speaking in the tone I so much disliked—it always seemed to impress me with the conviction that there was not one human charm about me.

"I think you ought to send for the doctor immediately, for Mrs. Henry!" I said.

"Hey! what is the matter?" he asked, looking a little startled.

"I fear her mind is a little affected!" I answered. I returned to the school-room, and resumed the task of striving to direct Minnie's thoughts, hoping, oh! so earnestly, to see the old interest in little things. I longed for Miss Baldwin's return from the city, and yet I dreaded it. The doctor came, and he left us weeping. Yet we hoped a night's sleep would restore our broken lily. She was quietly in bed when Miss Baldwin came home; her face was turned to the wall, as if she were asleep, but she was not. Aunt Lucy suggested that we should not tell Miss Baldwin how Mrs. Henry had been, as it would only frighten her, and our patient might be better in the morning. The night set in dismally: howling winds roamed about the house, and seemed to rack it. The servants set up late, fearing to go to bed. I had fallen into my first sound slumber, when soul-harrowing shrieks awoke me: they broke upon my senses with the terrific fear one sometimes experiences in dreams. I half started up, and my first exaggerated thoughts were, that some part of the house had been blown in, killing some of the family; or

that Mr. Henry was murdering his wife. The night was pitchy dark: I struck a light, and threw on a dressing gown. By this time I heard feet passing in the hall. I went out: Miss Baldwin, white as ashes, was hurrying down stairs; the servants were following at prudent distances. I hastened after them. As we neared Mrs. Henry's room, I distinguished the burden of those heart-rending cries.

"You are leaving me! You will leave me!"

The sad mystery was made clear. Reason had wholly forsaken the unhappy wife. Miss Baldwin burst into the chamber, speechless with surprise and fear. Mr. Henry sat in the arm-chair, by the bed, in boots and dressing gown: one arm was thrown around Minnie, one hand held hers, still she looked in his face, and imploringly shrieked,

"You will leave me!" and her moans and expressions of despairing helplessness were more pitiful than her wild cries. Miss Baldwin stared on her with dilated eyes: she was nailed to the floor. Minnie took no notice of us.

"Dear lamb! oh! Missus!" sobbed Aunt Lucy. This was a sign for the rest of the servants: their impetuous tears streamed forth. Miss Baldwin motioned to them to leave the room. She then turned to me, as if not deigning to trust Mr. Henry's account.

"How was she yesterday?"—her eyes seemed to look through me.

"She did not seem wholly herself!" I answered.

"Did you send for a physician?"

"Yes."

She went to Mrs. Henry, and took one white hand very gently. "Minnie, Minnie, darling!" she spoke in deepest accents of entreaty, but Minnie only looked at her as if she did not comprehend her, and whispered,

"Will he go?"

"No! child, I shall not go!" Mr. Henry answered; then looking at us, he said,

"She has been talking all night. I rose to dispatch a servant for the doctor, when she began to scream lest I should leave her." Miss Baldwin stepped into the adjoining room, and sent Jep for the physician; she came back, and stood in silence gazing upon her sister for an hour or more. Then she bade Aunt Lucy stay with her mistress, and she left us. I also stole to my chamber: Jessie and Ellen, full of vague fears, begged to creep in bed with me. Their warm, clasping arms seemed to protect me from utter dreariness. Sleep was impossible. I felt too keenly that the Mighty Refiner would not spare—the world seemed a vast crucible. Who could escape?

When the gray dawn broke, I rose softly, half envying the rosy sleep of the two children. Miss Baldwin did not come down to breakfast. The doctor had remained; he advised Mr. Henry not to leave his wife; if he but stirred, an expression of agony flashed over poor Minnie's face. Mr. Henry looked out of the window longingly, and cold gleams fell upon the unconscious wife from his large eyes. I shuddered to think how fearful a thing it was, for an affectionate woman thus to be bound Prometheus-like to a cold heart,—ever receiving mortal wounds, yet unable to tear away her clinging soul, albeit it was perishing under the strokes that fell. Whenever I happened to be in the bedroom, Mr. Henry looked very resigned to his lot; but when I chanced to observe him from the sitting room, I saw that his only care was to escape from the trouble of heeding the sufferer. In this he could not succeed, and I rejoiced from my heart in having him share the fatigues of a sick chamber. He always thought it was nothing for Minnie to be prisoned in her room from one week to another. He conceived it to be every one's duty to adapt themselves to circumstances.

It was nearly dinner time. I wondered Miss Baldwin did not come down. I went to her room, and tapped at the door. She bade me enter. She sat by the bedside; her face resting on it, she did not lift it up. I almost feared to speak to her, lest she should give me a haughty, abrupt answer. She was still in her dressing gown; her hair was disordered, as when at midnight she was startled from her rest.

"It is time to dress for dinner," I said.

She looked up. Alas! how the storm had swept through her being, leaving its traces upon her haggard face. With a weak, unsteady hand, she strove to gather up her still abundant hair.

"Shall I comb it?" I asked, handing her brush and comb.

"No!" she briefly answered: her cold, hard tone wounded me, and tears sprung to my eyes. I turned to leave her room.

"How is Minnie?" she questioned.

"The same!" I answered, not turning towards her lest she should see how I felt.

"Miss Hamilton?"

I looked at her.

"I am very hopeless now. Do I seem unkind?"

"Not now!"

"What *shall* we do?" she spoke with a kind of desperate despair.

"We can only live by the day, and hope for brighter times. She will probably recover."

Miss Baldwin shook her head. "There is a conviction here too mighty for hope; she will not recover." She laid her hand upon her heart. "There is a God," she continued gloomily, "for only omnipresence could see where to aim the blows that have struck me from my youth up. I have fallen

at last! Minnie was my all, my idol. How can I be a mother to those children!—that poor unhappy babe?"

"We will bear the care together. I have heard of many instances where temporary loss of reason has seemed to cleanse the heart of its griefs—with health, a healing wind has blown freshly through the spirit. It may be so with Minnie! There is a wise reason for this dispensation; it is to forward success of some kind. If she should die, we know that she would go to heaven: she is an unpretending Christian."

"And I am not!" Miss Baldwin slowly said. "Tell me," and she seized my arm with sudden eagerness, and looked searchingly into my eyes, "do you think your God *loves* you when He smites you?"

"I know He does, Miss Baldwin!"

"Have you suffered?—*deeply?*"

"I think I have!"

"Did you then dare to trust the disposal of your life to God?—did you not wish to shrink from his severity?"

"Yes, I did at times! I wished I could arrange my life myself—I wished I could put back suffering."

"And now?"——

"Now I only want to keep the Lord's path; if my yearning would turn me out of it, I want to be forced into it by omnipotence—because the end will be all I can desire."

Miss Baldwin sat down, and supported her forehead on her hand. After being buried in thought some time, she said, "Does it not seem cruel to you that so sweet a creature as Minnie should have had such an unhappy life?"

"It seems very sad; but if a moment's pain would buy her a year of bliss, would it be wise to attach too much importance to the moment? You will think thus of her earth-life when you see her in heaven."

The dinner bell rang; I hastened down stairs. Miss

Baldwin said she did not wish any dinner, but she came down in the afternoon, and with a new energy began to take charge of every thing. I saw that the pure gold of her nature was reached: she was all tenderness to Minnie; all devotion to the babe, all patience to the children, all kindness and forbearance to the servants;—but she toiled for light like one blind and weary.

CHAPTER XXV.

The spring buds had swollen, the tender leaves had put forth, the fresh blade of grass yielded to the willing foot. The resurrection-song was humming far and near. If spring came but once in a lifetime, it would steep the sluggish heart with presentiments of never-ceasing life and love,—it would seem a pledge of immortal joy and youth,—it would wing the earth-weary thoughts with exultation, and drop a healing nectar upon the wounds made by unbelief. But the glorious emblem of renewed youth is given every year,—and yet man ofttimes reads not the bright truth pictured in the sudden glory of the woodland: in vain the unsightly branches bend with a new grace above the singing stream, while rapturous music floats through the sunshiny air. The heart of nature beats with ecstasy, and strives to whisper to the sleeping heart of man, that his cold hours may be followed by spring and summer.

Winter had bound our hearts with a sterile coldness. All was dreary within. Minnie was not restored to health: she wandered about like a shadow—a miserable, devouring anguish impressed upon her features. She could not bear to be alone night or day, and she clung to us for comfort, until our souls were exhausted with giving, and drinking in the essence of her pain. Poor Minnie! when reason was

hers, she had held her sorrow in check, weeping her tears in silence; but nature was now revenged, the suffering would speak. Miss Baldwin was preyed upon by the deepest melancholy. Mr. Henry was morose, and often spoke to poor Minnie, when she unwittingly did annoying things, with a harshness that drove a sharp arrow to Miss Baldwin's heart, and made me wish he would leave home. Miss Baldwin naturally turned to me for cheer, as she had no one else to go to, and I longed for words of strength from a godlike nature. I looked back to my Boston home with weak regrets; its healthy air, I felt, would help to brace my heart, and make me strong to *bear* and *do*. Thus, in weariness, do we always ask for a change of place, and cry out for another path than the appointed one. Mrs. Henry had always been the charm of the house to visitors: they had ceased coming, since her lovely face had ceased to greet them. Ever since the bloom had returned to tree and flower, I had been eager to walk out alone, and receive courage and inspiration. I stole away and strolled by the river side. It seemed like escaping from a dark prison, thus to wander at will, and my heart revived with the strong, sweet hopes of old. I laughed at the past, sombre thoughts which had enchained me, and fancy bounded onward to the splendors yet in store! a prophetic exultation assured me that bliss was waiting for me. What mattered present impediments? I threw down the gauntlet to the foe. As I walked in the clear, blessed air, and caught the tender song of birds, I felt strong enough to meet my destiny, whatever it might be. The soft spring breath carried away all regrets. During the winter "the shadows lay upon me," and very often I regretted that I had driven James from me. He was strong and cheerful. The golden bowl was broken, and I should have taken the silver goblet, but now I did not so reason: all was well.

Just before I left the house, I had received a letter from

Grace; I had not read it. Her *happy* letter I had not answered for a long time; then one or two had miscarried which she had written: now I had one from her. I sat down under a great tree by the river side, to read it.

DEAR KATY.—I do hope this letter will reach you! It is so provoking to have letters miscarry. Katy, I can't write about much except my happiness. I believe I have not told you how we became reconciled, or if I have, it seems you did not get the letter. Well!—but first I must tell you that my heart beats as blissfully now as when I wrote the first news about it; down deeper in my heart goes stealing the strong conviction of ever-increasing love, joy and rest. The mighty plan of life comes before my gaze—I see the power of love to win all things into beauty and harmony. It is the impulse of unregenerate man to drain his cup of gladness away from the sorrowful: but to the regenerating heart, love becomes more powerful, when two, hand in hand, look forth upon the world, and give out their happy strength to those who need it. Then, when they return to their quiet ark together, they see that a diviner beauty has come to it, while they had gone forth;—a rarer freshness has touched it, and new sweetnesses have pressed their way within it. It is a sad but righteous justice when love dies out from the hearts of the dissolute. Ah! I wonder sometimes if cold philosophers would not gladly have their dry hearts humanized with the rich warm glories of this love they laugh at! A pitiable laughter! it is like the raillery of the withered crone upon youth and loveliness! But to my story: Thanks for bidding me unlock "my innermost." Oh, Katy, you do not know how many weary days I passed in watching, suspense and heavy disappointment. After we made that visit at Blooming Hill, I looked daily to see the face of Mr. Waldron, but he did not come. I met him at a party one

evening. When his eyes fell on me, I felt that my home was in his spirit: how full of earnest sadness was his look. He came to me: we passed the compliments of the evening, and talked about a new book, but he left me as soon as he could find an excuse to do so. My very heart seemed choked—stifled. I seemed to see that the glory had departed from my life,—that henceforth I must tread a flinty path alone. He often looked at me during the evening, and sometimes I felt sure that the impulse to come to me was strong upon him. But he did not.

And then weeks, even months, passed by. I sat here in the parlor alone one afternoon; suddenly I heard his voice in the hall. I sprang up to meet him; I never thought of his coldness. He came in, and looked at me one half instant. I was smiling, and my soul was looking in his eyes. I could not turn away from the magnetic gaze that drew me, at first. Then my eyes dropped. He took me within his arms, and murmured, "Grace!"

He had never called me by that name before, and it came from his lips in a tone so infinitely tender, so protecting. My soul surrendered itself to him with a thrill of heavenly ecstasy. Over me came the thought, "His for life, for death, for immortality." I have been in a delicious dream since then. We forgot all explanations for *hours* that day; I thought they were moments, Kate. "And why?"—I at length asked him, looking in his eyes, without finishing the sentence.

"I thought you loved Benzoni until this day!" he answered.

"Benzoni!" I exclaimed in utmost surprise; "why?"

"One evening at Blooming Hill, Grace, I was in the Post-Office, when you dropped in a letter addressed to him."

"And for so slight a reason—"

"No! not for that. The next evening I walked over to

Mr. Cardover's to tell you what was in my heart, Grace. I entered a side gate, and started on my way to the house by a winding path; the shrubbery concealed me from view. I saw you hasten from the house to the summer-house. Benzoni met you at the door, and caught you to his heart: you disappeared inside. I went homeward: yet for weeks I strove to believe that you could not love that man. I learned that his wife was dead, and that you were engaged to him. By some happy fortune I called on Miss Cardover to-day; she spoke of you, and I asked when you were to be married to Mr. Benzoni. I had not been able to bring myself to ask questions about you, or I might long since have found out the truth. Miss Cardover explained all to me; the persecutions of Mr. Benzoni; that he was not a widower, and that he had at last gone to Europe. And then I came to meet you, Grace."

That was long ago, Katy. How I long to see you, to tell you all our plans. Will you be my bridesmaid, cousin mine? Horace proposes that we shall be married immediately, in order to defy the little fates, who decree that,

"The course of true love never *did* run smooth."

But we are going to wait your return. James Bedell is visiting at Miss Cardover's; he seems rather pleased with Gertrude: she has really grown to be a handsome girl, eminently practical and agreeable; she seems to think James is the most sensible, the most intellectual, and the most profound of men.

Poor Mrs. Henry and Miss Baldwin! I am glad for their sakes that your lot is cast with them. Will you not come home in the fall? I cannot bear to think of getting married unless you are here. Mary and the children send love. Horace sends his also.

Good-bye, my darling.

GRACE.

I did not read this letter all at once. I stopped at the name of Mr. Waldron as if I had fallen into a bewildering dream—I feared I should wake and find it such. I looked at the river. Yes! it flowed on actually in real dimpling brightness; the buds were truly swelling on the trees—the tiny spring flowers were rising from among the brown, wintry leaves—I plucked some. Then I went on reading the letter, while my soul seemed floating in clouds of amazement. What could it mean? Grace did not love Pliny! it was Mr. Waldron that she had loved all the time. How could I have been so deceived? What was it which had led me to think she had loved Mr. Cardover. Ah! it broke over me now: he loved her, and I had mistaken her embarrassment for a different feeling. Alas! he had turned to her; it pained me all over in my thoughts to feel that I had never had any attraction for him. But it was sweet to my pride to know that my own soul was the only temple for my secret. I wondered if he ever turned his thoughts southward! if I still seemed like the "sister Kate" of our first acquaintance. I wondered if Miss Cardover ever read him my letters, which Grace sometimes lent her. I wondered if I stood before his fancy as one sublimely indifferent to him—I hoped so. Love is so beautiful and powerful, it should live in silence in human hearts, if it cannot meet as beautiful and powerful a response: water should not be given for wine.

And James! I had not heard of his going North at all. He had not entered Mr. Henry's house since we parted on that unhappy night. I wondered if he would soon come back to the South, and if he was really pleased with Gertrude. How many thoughts I had that spring day down by the river side.

But my little holiday was nearly over: I must go back to my prison, and see gloomy faces turned to me for some support. So I rose and walked slowly towards the handsome

villa which was my home. As I looked towards it, and thought one would imagine it the abode of love and peace, I saw a gentleman descending the front steps. It was James. I met him at the gate.

"Did you call to see me?" I asked, extending my hand, and reading only kindness in his face.

"Yes. I have seen your friends in Boston," he returned.

"Will you come in again, James?"

"Not to-day. I came to say that I found Mrs. Rodman's family all well: they hope to see you in the fall. He looked far more cheerful than when I had last seen him

"Are we good friends, James?" I asked, looking at him for the forgiveness I needed.

"I trust we are, Kate," he answered.

"And you have not been angry with me?—have not thought I deserved blame?"

He hesitated, and then spoke with the frank boldness of his honest nature. "I *have* thought you deserved blame; you encouraged me when you knew what my hope was."

"I have blamed myself for it; it was unpremeditated. I am sorry I did so: you seemed like a brother."

A sudden tenderness gleamed in his face.

"Good-bye!" I said, opening the gate, determined that he should not blame me again for encouraging the kind looks I loved to see.

"Good-bye!" he said, bowing low. And then he went away.

The children were playing on the lawn. Minnie stood in the front door, looking off wistfully towards the distant woods. As I neared the house, she ran in and obtained Jessie's sun-bonnet.

"May I walk with you, Miss Hamilton?" she asked, appealingly.

"Yes indeed, dear Minnie!" I replied, delighted to find that she cared to go. The doctor said when she began to *care* for any thing it would be a good symptom. So she came down the steps, and put her arm around my waist, and I put mine about her, and we slowly walked back to the river, talking about the sweet awakening of spring life. All winter Minnie had sat with folded hands near us, and had followed us when we went into another room. Sometimes she had seemed a little excited and wild, but now she was gently docile, and a new hope awoke for her restoration. After a short walk we went back to the house. Miss Baldwin sat on the piazza with her work; the children were still at play. We sat down on the steps. "Shall I tell you about Miss Hartly?" asked Minnie, raising her blue eyes to mine, one elbow rested on my knee. "Shall I, Adelaide?" she appealed to her sister.

"Perhaps you had better not, dear," returned Miss Baldwin, in the gentle tone she had always used towards Minnie since her affliction. "I will tell her some time myself. See! Freddie is calling you."

Minnie ran down the steps, and sat down on the grass to watch the children.

"How beautiful she was, the first time she entered that gate as its mistress," said Miss Baldwin; "she was more of a child than Jessie is now. She was but fifteen, and she laughed and danced about with her ringlets flying, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks brighter than the rose. She gave Mr. Henry a chase around the grounds; he caught her at last, and brought her in his arms, laughing, until he placed her on the piazza. He used to take her out to ride every day, and whenever the ground was damp, he would say, "Come, fairy!" she used to spring in his arms from the top step, and he would carry her to the carriage. He made a perfect idol of her during the first year of their marriage;

and she had such pretty, winning ways. Long, long before Minnie ever suspected it, I knew that her husband was unfaithful to her. The Miss Hartly she spoke of was one of his last victims. I have thought lately that I might have been too hard with the poor girl. She was a young, artless creature, and she thought Mr. Henry an angel of light for a long time. He undermined her faith in existing customs, with a subtilty and slowness that might have corrupted an older and wiser head. She believed for a long time that Minnie was all deceit, and persecuted her husband in a thousand sly ways. But as soon as her ruin was accomplished, she was overwhelmed with the wildest grief and remorse: she went to Minnie, threw herself at her feet, and besought her to take her life. What do you think Minnie did? Why, she cried over her as if her heart would break. She was at last convinced of her husband's guilt. She took a hundred dollars from her drawer, placed them in Miss Hartly's hand, and bade her seek some sheltered spot, where God would have mercy on her. I gave the girl scornful, vehement blame, as she left the door. Mr. Henry had left for the North, as soon as Minnie found the matter out. You were here on the night of his return, and saw how agitated Minnie was."

"And what has become of that poor girl?" I asked.

"She is in a small town in Virginia. She had an infant, but it died. She wrote to Minnie that she was employed as a servant. She did not consider herself fit to be a governess. She returned ten dollars of the sum Minnie gave her, and hoped at some time to pay it all back."

"Poor girl!" I could not help sighing, as I recalled the lovely face Jessie had once showed me; and I felt that her soul was chaste and white, compared with that of her seducer. Unhappy one! how in her dismal loneliness must she sigh for words of hope and cheer. How must she long for a pity-

ing, outstretched hand! The fact of her not remaining in sin, proved her to be worthy of that mercy which was not denied to the adulteress. I could not help respecting her for bowing her neck to drudging toil, that she might expiate her sin.

"Has she no relatives, Miss Baldwin?" I asked.

"She has a brother, but he has never known her shame."

"Don't you pity her from your soul, Miss Baldwin? Oh! what a desolate lot!"

"I do feel sorry for her. But what can be done for her?"

"I don't know," I answered, pondering. "It is so hard that she should be held in chains of degradation, when her better self has repudiated her wrong act." After a few moments a bright thought came.

"I am going to write to her, Miss Baldwin."

"Why?"

This simple word, very coolly put, suddenly brought me down to a very modest estimate of my powers as a comforter to Miss Hartly,—but it did not check my eager impulse.

"Oh, because she is so lonely—I want her to know that there is a distant heart that knows her story, and blesses her, and hopes for her."

I started to write my letter. "Kate!" called Miss Baldwin, "you may tell her I forgive her." I looked back, and saw with joy that a momentary sunlight gleamed over Miss Baldwin's stern, melancholy face. I felt that the dawn was breaking over her spirit. I wrote and despatched the letter, ere the sun went quite below the distant tree tops. I directed it to the assumed name Miss Hartly had taken.

It was not two weeks before an answer came; it contained but few words, and made no parade of her temptations, youth, and repentance. It only said—

"Oh! I thank you from my heart for your letter. My soul was fainting for encouragement. I was perishing for lack of kindness. I know that I did not deserve it, but I *will* leave the past to my Redeemer, and hope in God and the future, if I can. I thank Miss Baldwin.

"Gratefully,

"E. HARTLY."

Poor child! How many jewelled hands would smite thee back, albeit the hands belonged to hearts no better. How many strong arms that should prove a protection, would lead thee to more hopeless ruin. A few days after the receipt of this letter, and while my heart was yet turning to the writer with vague projects for bettering her condition, I was startled from my thoughtful mood, by a thundering knock at the front door. One of the servants went to give the knocker admittance, but he did not choose to come in. For a half hour he paced with impetuous tread the piazza. I stepped into the hall as Bess was passing through, and asked,

"Who *is* that man, Bess, and why does he walk the piazza so?"

She shook her head, and said he had inquired for Mr. Henry, who had not returned from the city. I went out on the upper piazza, and with commendable curiosity, leaned over, and tried to catch a glimpse of the impassioned stranger. But I could not. At the same moment Mr. Henry rode to the gate, and dismounted from his horse. The stranger rushed down the steps, and met him in the broad stone walk.

"Do I speak to Mr. Henry?" he demanded.

Mr. Henry bowed in his courteous manner, but kept an eye of surprise on the young man.

"Then, sir," said the latter with quiet fierceness, "either

you or I will lie stretched on the sod before that sun sets!"

He handed Mr. Henry a pistol: a growing paleness overspread the Southerner's face, as he asked, "Who are you, sir?"

"An honest man confronting a villain! I am the avenger of a sister's wrongs!"

The stranger turned his face a moment to the declining sun, as if to look his last. Gracious Heaven! it was Walter Gray!

"Where shall we go?" I heard his impatient lips utter. It all flashed upon me in a moment. Miss Hartly was the half sister he had sometimes talked to me about. I entered the hall, bounded down the stairs, and stood by him, with my hand on his arm, my lips refusing to speak. His face was deadly white. He lifted his hand to his forehead, and dreamingly said,

"Kate! am I in a dream?" His eyes had a bewildered look.

"Yes, it is a dream," I answered, taking from his hand the pistol he held. I flung it quickly at a distance, for I was afraid to hold it. My appearance soon explained itself to him, when he remembered that he had heard I was teaching at the South.

"You must leave us, Kate," he said, with a compression of his lips.

"Mr. Henry will wait five minutes," I said.

"There is no danger of my absconding, sir!" Mr. Henry exclaimed, as the hot, haughty blood mounted to his forehead.

"I *must* speak with you, Walter: it may be the last time," I said. I placed my hand within his arm, and led him unwillingly away. I spoke rapidly:

"Mr. Henry no doubt is not fit to live, but if you mur-

der him the evil will not stop there. He has a lovely wife: she has lost her reason, but within a few weeks we have seen a slight improvement. A sudden shock might render her a confirmed lunatic. Your vengeance would not strike the innocent, would it?"

"It is a righteous thing," he responded, "for a man to avenge a sister's wrongs, when the law fails to do it. Only a fiend in human shape could have corrupted her."

"I received a letter from her, Walter, a few days ago?"

"Ah!"

"Did she write to you?"

"Yes," he replied, "after a silence of months. She told me she was ruined, and by whom."

"But, Walter, you will do her an irreparable injury by making a noise about it."

"How can she be injured farther? Her good name is gone, and I can neither eat nor sleep until"—

"Hush! her shame is not known in this neighborhood. She left it long ago, and she bears an assumed name in a little village in Virginia. She is a stranger in Boston, and as your sister will be respected and beloved. Take her to Cousin Mary's to board. I will never reveal the secret to any member of the family."

"Could it be done?" asked Walter, as hope gleamed in his eye.

"Certainly; nothing is easier. There is no justice in condemning a woman to lasting infamy, when a man would not be cast from society for the same thing. She shall be my sister as well as yours, Walter."

He was silent a very long time. We walked slowly along away from the house, and towards the woods. At length he said, "Thank you, dear Kate. That villain escapes—it is only for her sake." His rigid lips and the concentrated energy in his eye, betrayed the difficulty with

which he gave up his revenge. When my purpose was accomplished, I became aware of the fright and shock I had sustained. I leaned against a tree until I had recovered myself; then we resumed the conversation.

"Where is she, Kate?" demanded Walter. "Her letter was post-marked Washington: it is evidently her design not to let me find her out at present."

"Perhaps she feared you could not forgive her at first. Shall you go to see her?"

"Yes, certainly. My property fell to me through my father's relatives, therefore Effie would be no better off if I did not share my fortune with her. Before I went to Europe I deposited a sum in bank for her: she has never called for it; most probably she has known nothing about it, for she was wandering about that time, and all trace of her was lost."

I explained to Walter where his sister was, and added, "Oh how I wish I could go with you to see her."

"*Will* you, Kate?"

"Yes."

"Would you venture back alone?" he questioned.

"Yes, indeed."

"Go with me in the morning, then. I will meet you with a carriage by that tree in the road. Do you see it?"

"That tree so far from the house, where the road begins to turn?"

"Yes, right there. At seven o'clock."

"Agreed. Shall I be absent more than three days?" I asked, beginning to think Miss Baldwin would consider me a very ridiculous girl.

"Not more than three days, I think. I am so glad you are going with me, Kate," Walter said, with something of his old cordial manner. After our plans had been discussed thoroughly, Walter went away, and I turned towards the

house with a kind of terrible feeling, for it devolved upon me to tell Mr. Henry that the duel was not to come off. He sat alone in the porch; his dark eyes, set teeth, and pale countenance showed his excitement.

"Miss Hartly's brother will not see you again," I said, hastening up the steps, and gliding into the house as quickly as possible. If I had stopped one moment, I felt as if Mr. Henry's look of fierce passion would have transfixed me.

"Come back!" he briefly commanded.

I obeyed, and stood in the door-way..

"What does that young man intend to do?" he asked, without looking at me.

"Nothing!"

"Nothing? What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say. He is going away to-morrow," I replied.

"Does the matter *stop* there?" He fixed his dark, keen gaze upon me.

"Yes."

He still looked at me, as if he desired I should explain the causes which had operated with Walter. I said nothing.

"Perhaps," suggested Mr. Henry, "he wishes it settled in a business way."

"With money?" I asked, unable to repress a scornful accent.

"Yes," he answered.

I turned away with a disdainful smile, and went in the house. "To weigh immortal souls, and life-agonies, and repentance, and all that is of moment, against *money!* I went to my room, and thought what a variety in my quiet life a little journey would be. I took down my travelling dress, and laid out the few things I should need in the morning. I had resolved only to carry a pretty little basket Mrs

Henry had given me. I hated unnecessary baggage. While I was thinking what a romantic little adventure I was soon to have, Miss Baldwin came in.

"Why, Kate!" she exclaimed, looking on the bed where my things were spread out.

"Why, Miss Baldwin, that stranger is Miss Hartly's brother, and the very Walter you have heard me speak of. I am going with him to-morrow to see Effie. Is that right?"

"You must do as you think best, of course," she replied; "but—what are you going for? What is the use?"

"Oh, I want to go. I don't know what the use is."

We sat down, and had one of our nice long talks. I told her why Walter had come to see Mr. Henry. Miss Baldwin seemed more like her old, cheerful self than I had seen her in a long time.

In the morning I bade the children "Good-bye" very quietly, and with my pretty little basket strolled down the road, where I found Walter and the carriage waiting. It was a delicious morning, and I was so happy that I came very near being quite gay when I met Walter's glance, which was kind but very grave. There was such an exulting sense of freedom in getting away from my cares, and in stepping forth into new scenes. Walter had sad experiences to tell of the heartlessness which he had found in the world. We talked very feelingly upon this subject, until we had passed off some of the unpleasant smoke of life in this way, then we rallied and ventured upon a little melancholy satire relative to the miseries of humanity. After this we went a little farther, and gradually began to take a different view. The comic side presented itself, and Walter's old, merry peals of laughter joined mine, until the forests echoed them. I was glad to see this reaction of feeling in him.

But our journey came to its end. We had reached by railroad the village where Effie lived, and the awkwardness

of the meeting came over us—the remembrance of the sufferings of the erring one. We left the cars and wandered about in search of the house where Mrs. Williams lived; by this name, Effie was known. After patient search we found the desired dwelling; the front door stood open; we knocked, and as no one came, we entered the hall; we tapped lightly at the next door: I could hear Walter's agitated breathing. As no one opened the door, we entered; it was a plain, dreary room, with a rag carpet and wooden chairs. A young girl sat on a low seat; her graceful head had dropped upon a chair; she looked tired, and she was fast asleep. The sun shone upon her small head, and light brown, waving hair, which was plainly parted, and gathered in a braid at the back. The pale, lovely face was the same which had looked at me from the miniature; but the then smiling lips were closed in weariness and melancholy. She wore a coarse, dark calico dress, fitting exquisitely, and finished off at the throat with a little white collar. Walter looked at her a moment, and burst into an agony of tears,—he hastily quitted the room. The sleeper awoke. She started on seeing a stranger, and asked almost timidly, "Do you wish to see Mrs. Allen?"

"No!" I said; "I am a friend of yours, Effie. I am Kate Hamilton." I put my arm around her, and kissed her. Her pale face flushed, and tears gathered in her eyes. Walter entered. She clasped her hands with a start, and then covered her face with them, sinking in a chair, and lowering her head to her bosom, in an attitude of intensest shame. Walter gently raised the bowed head, kissed her forehead; kissed the drooping eyes from which the tears rained; kissed the trembling lips.

"Effie, the past is to be forgotten!" he whispered.

I could have knelt, and kissed his hand, but only cried with all my heart.

Mrs. Allen, a good-natured, but coarse woman, allowed us to make a hotel of her house, for the night. What a contrast between mistress and servant: the former was the thrifty wife of a quondam New England farmer: her one idea was housework; Effie's slender hands, red and chopped, showed what her duties had been. When she took a pail to go out and milk, at Mrs. Allen's request, Walter blushed painfully.

I slept with Effie that night. It was late before we had packed up her wardrobe for her northward journey on the morrow; and when we sought our pillows, we could not sleep from excitement.

"Oh!" sighed Effie, "if my unhappy history should ever be discovered! Poor Walter! Such a brother deserves a sister whom he might be proud of."

"He may learn to be proud of you," I said, in reply. "Look forward rather than backward. I do not think your misfortune will ever become known; if it should, he will be among those who will love you for what you are, rather than for what you have been."

"I have always looked to others," she said, "and leaned on others: the breath of approbation was my life. The fear that my secret will be discovered, will always hang over me like a drawn sword, robbing me of all pleasure, even when I am commended. Perhaps it will teach me to look for God's approbation, knowing that a breath can change the estimate in which human beings hold me."

"Effie, when you learn the hearts of Cousin Mary and Grace, you can tell them your history, if fear still hangs over you. If people were true in judgment, we might soon learn to possess frankness. As society is constituted, it is often best to withhold the truth, when we would not deny it."

"Ah! Kate, how well it is that God will never drive us from His fold."

"Well, indeed!"

Mrs. Allen was up, and bustling about the house, before we had closed our eyes. Effie got up, and dressed, and I dropped away into the most delicious slumber, realising how great the privilege was, by constantly dreaming I ought to get up; reiterating a vision of the process of dressing, until I saw myself before the little glass, with every rebellious hair adjusted to its place, my linen collar laid down smoothly, my gloves on, etc.

"Come, Kate," sounded an unknown voice. It was that of Effie; and to my despair, I discovered that my neatness and energy were mere illusions.

Mrs. Allen was exceedingly loth to part with her "help." We all went to the same depot. Walter placed me on board the cars, and then ran to bring Effie to bid me "Good-bye," but as usual the cars started off, before they could reach us. I caught a glimpse of their handsome faces, and saw Effie's white handkerchief wave until they were lost from sight. For an hour, I was all attention to what was going on in the cars: the passengers were possessed of varied physiognomies, and I attached a history or prophecy to each face. The scenery was wild and glorious; but very soon fatigue and sleep came overpoweringly, and the journey was completed under a double green veil.

When I reached home, Minnie met me first. I saw with delight that she greeted me in her old, sweet, affectionate manner. Dear Minnie! she was destined to come back to us yet. Miss Baldwin seemed quite cheerful. When Minnie was away, I said, "How fast she improves!"

"Do you see it?" asked Miss Baldwin, with a smile full of hope. "The doctor says we need have no fears now, if we are careful of her health."

CHAPTER XXVI.

It was through a picture gallery in Florence, that Giovanni Benzoni wandered; sometimes sitting down, and holding his head between his hands in very weariness, and again moving about, and studying a picture with a true Italian's love of art. It was a great, silent gallery, and rarely entered by new visitors. It seemed like a cold, well appointed chamber of the intellect, filled with fair images, yet unwarmed and unlighted by the heart. A strange sense of isolation came upon the homeless man, as he gazed upon a picture, representing a peasant and wife, with an infant child of great beauty. The wife was looking up in the eyes of her brawny husband, with a childlike love and pride. Benzoni sighed, and thought of the heavy hour when he clasped his babe to his heart for the last time: he thought of the kneeling, agonized Judith, and wondered if he had not wronged her. He turned away from viewing the picture; his eye fell upon a group at a distance, and then was spell-bound to one face! a face glorious in beauty, pale and proud though it was: the great, luminous eyes were riveted upon him calmly, yet in their quietness, they glowed and flashed. The full, haughty lip did not quiver; the stately presence did not droop; the great eyes did not remove their gaze, until Benzoni turned away from their powerful magnetism. And he watched that

queenly form, and caught every cold smile that flashed over that lip,—and he marked with wonder the superb bearing that won an almost reverential worship from the two gifted men near her; men whom he had known and honored: he saw the gentle faces of women turned to her with friendship. She was the cynosure of every new visitor's eye. It was not alone her beauty, but the fascination of manner, look, and smile: exquisitely cultivated they had been. Her voice even fell upon the husband's ear, laden with choicest words; with the "honey of persuasion," for she was winning one at her side to think with her; her seducing tones were modulated to sink into Benzoni's listening heart, to waken old feelings, to create intense longings. And yet never while there did her eyes fall upon her husband; the slight color had returned to her cheek; almost the haughtiness had melted into grace and sweetness. The party left the gallery; Benzoni followed at a distance, and marked the dwelling which his wife entered in company with her friends.

At evening there was a masquerade ball, to which Benzoni was invited. He went, hoping to see Judith. She came, magnificently robed in velvet and jewels; but she wore no mask, and when he spoke to her from beneath his, she retreated without reply among her friends, the former proud calmness sitting on her lip. There was no agitation, no embarrassment, no excitement evident in her manner, and yet her heart thrilled and heaved with an emotion that seemed overmastering. Pride is a mighty controller of the leaping pulse.

Judith was visiting friends in Florence. She had brought Isa with her. To every proposal to visit places of art she lent a willing ear, for she thirsted to meet her husband,—to meet him with proud indifference. Henceforth she took Isa with her, and she saw with a strange thrill the look which the father bestowed upon the child, and the entreating pas-

sion in his eyes, as he turned again to her. Judith felt that she was again beloved, not alone as the mother of his child, but as a beautiful and gifted treasure in herself. But with this conviction, the coldness of her face deepened, and she avoided with double art any proximity to her husband. Thus weeks passed on, and she had not spoken to him.

* * * * * * * *

She sat by the window which overlooked the garden, and the distant Tiber. She sat within her home, and Isa's arms clung about her neck, while rushing thoughts swept athwart her brain, until her heart waved to and fro, now melting into love, now steeling itself into pride. The door opened, and her husband stood before her; he gazed upon the picture, and held out his arms to the child. She went to him; Judith did not seek to prevent her, but Isa shrunk from his passionate caresses, and fled from the room. Meantime Judith sat unmoved, save that her haughty eye asked the meaning of the intrusion. The last time he had been in that room, swept before her: her kneeling, creeping, clinging figure. He dared not speak as he read the language of that eye: he knelt before her with pale, unmoving lips. She rose. He lightly, reverently touched her dress: he had grown more humble since he had learned how hard a thing it is to win back an outraged love.

"Judith!"

Her cold, icy tones broke the stillness in reply.

"This house is yours! I can seek another. *My* home must be free from your presence."

"Judith!"

"Enough!" she uttered. "I go from here!"

She turned from him.

"Stay!" he entreated, rising to his feet, yet unable to control his agitation.

Her intensely pale, proud face turned towards him—her

lips were closed with the determination of a mighty will—her glowing, yet steadfast eyes demanded his business. It was fearful to behold that calm face; calm from the profound excitement that held her whole being at a pause.

"I believe you innocent," came with difficulty from the lips of her husband.

Madame Benzoni bowed very slightly—very coldly, with no change of expression or attitude. She had every day expected a communication like this. Her eyes still seemed to demand his right to intrude upon her.

"Oh, Judith! Judith!"—the tones were very low, with passionate appealing—with anguish.

She waved her hand with a haughty gesture for him to stop—she could not speak for a moment; then she said, "I will leave here to-morrow."

Benzoni saw no relenting in her sternly, beautiful countenance.

"This home is sacred to you!" he said. "Farewell—Judith—*wife*"—and he left her.

When he was lost to her sight, she put forth her hand feebly, as if it were dark: she slightly grasped the heavy mahogany chair in which she had been sitting—then her hold relaxed—she sunk insensible upon the floor.

Benzoni wandered away into the country, and when he became weary, he sat down in the evening sunshine a very desolate man. He knew not what to do with his life—with his stalwart manhood.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The spring winds were blowing around Miss Cardover's house with a dreary sound. It was early in the evening, but Pliny Cardover had retired to his room. He sat by a table, and had ceased writing, with his suspended pen uplifted and his thoughtful glance bent on the low fire that glimmered in the grate.

"It does seem like a desolate world," he mused, "whenever I allow my thoughts to centre upon my own position in it. I have made missteps and mistakes, and the little golden ore I have obtained, has been through rugged difficulties. I poured out the holiest love of my being at a beautiful shrine —and I learned that the idol which it held was not such an one as I had believed—it was another's. And so that first vision of exquisite happiness died out. That was well. I became thankful that my mistake was discovered to me—I did not wish to love a beautiful creation of my soul—I wished to love a real being who possessed in herself all the sweetnesses I yearned to see in women. And—yes! I thought I had found such an one, and love arose again, more omnipotent than before. I saw—I knew it—I saw such an inward nature as could have riveted my heart for ever. Strange! she seemed so to confide in me, so to trust in me, and yet God has denied to me the power of winning her love. Why

is it that Horace Waldron should be so fortunate? why must I live this cold, stony life? Ah! foolishness! I must not think of this!" Mr. Cardover ran his hand through his dark hair, and then turned his eyes upon his letter: he wrote a few words, and paused again, musing,—"Horace is of a different genius from myself,—there is a sort of celestial purity about him which I lack. I need his faith, his world-embracing love. I am too abrupt, too unyielding, too unwilling to pour out my life-efforts for humanity; and for this perchance I am debarred individual happiness. Well! I will give up seeking for that which I cannot obtain. I will turn to my cold existence with more content, if I can, and win from its sterility some imperishable profit. I must cease to think of her, if I would labor diligently in the present. I must resolve to await destiny with more patience." Pliny Cardover's thoughts were broken in upon by a familiar rap.

"Come in!" he briefly said, and Mr. Waldron entered, bringing with him a fresh atmosphere.

"Sit down, Horace," Mr. Cardover said, handing him a chair. "It is chilly out of doors, is it not?"

"I had not noticed. The weather makes little impression on me," answered Mr. Waldron. His pale, handsome countenance had acquired of late a look of interior brightness, as if some great joy dwelt in the centre of his being—strangers might not have noticed it, but his deep, tranquil eyes shone with a new lustre, as if a mist had been dispelled from the hidden soul. Pliny had noticed this for months, and had divined its cause, although no words had passed between the friends relative to its cause; and yet they had been companions from childhood.

"Do I disturb you, Pliny? you were writing."

"It is of no consequence," returned Mr. Cardover, pushing back his writing materials, and drawing his chair nearer the fire, as he replenished it. After this was done, he looked

at his friend, and abruptly said, "You and Grace love each other, Horace?"

Mr. Waldron bowed, and a flush rose to his white forehead—he had not yet ceased to thrill strangely at the mention of her beloved name. "I should have told you long before, Pliny," he said, "but—"

"I understand—your emotions were too sacred to be mentioned to ears profane;" a half sad, half bitter smile was on Mr. Cardover's lip as he said this.

"When you are undergoing like experiences, Pliny, I shall be able to be more communicative." Mr. Waldron's smile was of a different character.

It was time now for the hasty color to mount the brow of the host. "When shall you be married?" he asked, stirring the fire, as if to prevent the conversation from becoming low and confidential.

"In the autumn: soon after Grace's cousin returns from the South. She is to be bridesmaid—and while I think of it, Pliny, I will secure your services as groomsman, if you do not object."

"No! certainly not;" responded Mr. Cardover.

"I was rather disappointed, Pliny, that you did not take a fancy to that little Kate Hamilton last summer."

"Were you?" said Mr. Cardover gloomily.

"Yes, because I think she would make you an excellent wife."

"When other people judge for us, they often make as great mistakes as we do in choosing for ourselves," Mr. Cardover said a little impatiently. "I shall live a bachelor."

"Nonsense! I do not believe it."

"And yet you know me well enough, Horace, to be assured that I will not marry, unless I *believe* I have found one who is entirely suited to me—and then such an one may

not fancy me; so there is a strong probability that I shall go down to my grave as you see me now."

Mr. Waldron observed that his friend was not in a jesting humor:—he wished that he understood the current of his thoughts, but he was entirely ignorant of their direction. He wished that he could pour into his cold spirit the rich light in which he himself lived, but he could not do this, and he left him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The July sunshine streamed upon the lawn softly, upon the flowers, and upon the light, airy dwelling which was so pretty, so graceful, as it overlooked the gliding river. This late sunshine also penetrated into the arbor, and shone upon the serene brow of Miss Baldwin.

"Now," I said, "now tell me as you promised."

"You think I am an old maid?" she said.

"Yes! you are not a widow?" I inquired with surprise.

"That I do not know," she replied. "When I was young, Kate, I never won a heart-warm interest from those of my own sex, much less the other. I was not ugly in person, not uneducated, not lacking in mental wealth altogether, and I yearned so deeply for the interest which I saw bestowed upon those who were not more truthful. I had not tact; I was plain in speech, always wounding, and creating enemies, when I had no thought of doing so. Thus time passed until I was twenty-five. I was an heiress, and had received a few insignificant offers from fortune-hunters. I read their hearts. I spent a winter in Washington at one time, and bade my aunt whom I was visiting, not to disclose my expectations. She had a great deal of company: among others, a gentleman named Gerald Ross, frequently came to the house. He selected me as an object of attention from the first. He was about thirty-five; handsome and well-informed. He seemed

to feel a true interest in me, and to him I frankly confided thoughts and feelings which I had never breathed to others. He offered me his heart. Oh! I loved with the pent-up feeling of years,—beyond all power of expression. I adored him with a grateful worship, for he had taught me that I was not to be cast away from every heart, as unlovely, and unworthy of love. I learned the beautiful capacities of my nature, and drank from an o'erflowing bowl. I told him of my wealth. There was no elation in his look: even his color did not change. I esteemed him more than ever for this indifference to the money-god. He begged that we should be married soon. We went to my father's home. Gerald was admired and loved. My parents were glad of my happiness. In a week after my father had seen my lover, we were married. My husband wrote to a friend, who furnished a handsome country-house for us. My father settled upon me the property coming to me, and with our whole family, we journeyed to Washington; thence we went to our country Paradise. That happy month I shall never forget; yet I half desired the time to come, when Gerald and I should be alone. He was utterly devoted to me. At last farewells were said, blessings were pronounced, and we were quite alone. A few days after, Gerald came in with a clouded brow. I took a seat by him on the sofa, and laid my head on his shoulder, saying, 'What is it?'

"He slightly moved away from me, and then rose and walked the floor. That slight movement of repulsion, the raising of his hand to bid me remove my head, went to my heart with inexpressible sharpness. It recalled the pang that had been my companion for so many years.

"'I must leave you for a couple of days, Adelaide,' he suddenly exclaimed. He hurriedly kissed me, and left. I did not ask any questions, for my first one was unanswered. I sunk down on the sofa with a sad heart; I feared he was

beginning to grow tired of me. I knew that I had no winning ways,—that my manner was repulsive rather, but I drove away the clouds that hovered about me, and resolved that our home should be all brightness when he came back. The afternoon I expected him, I filled the house with the fragrance of flowers. I wore them in my hair, and in my bosom; a bouquet graced the little workstand where I sewed. But evening closed in, and he did not come. My flowers all withered and he did not come. He never came. Kate! he had a wife and children living in England. He had learned in some way that I was rich before he saw me. He went from this country with my property. I have never known any thing of him since. My father endeavored to trace him, but in vain. He left me with the pang of being unloved in my soul, burned in with fire, as it had never been before. I went to my father's house again. Minnie became my idol; when she married, I came to live with her. I have passed many years in rebellion and conflict—I have madly doubted and despaired of any brightness, of any deep, satisfying peace. But I begin to feel as if it is morning yet, the morning of existence—I begin to hope that I have not suffered as vainly as I thought I had. I hope for a fresh dayspring; I almost see it breaking."

Here Minnie broke in upon us with the children. Reason had entirely returned to her, and the faint rose on her cheek betokened a degree of physical health which she had not enjoyed in years.

"Oh, Kate! how I dread to have you leave us," Mrs. Henry said. I rose and put my arm around her, as I had long been accustomed to do in her convalescence; we walked away from the arbor. Minnie raised her blue eyes and said, "You will leave me a happier and better woman than you found me. I do not feel myself a blighted human flower now. My sorrow will not kill me, crush me, as it has done.

I shall feel, notwithstanding it, that I am one of God's bright children, and that He will in His own time give me 'beauty for ashes.'"

That darling Minnie! her sweet meekness penetrated to my heart: I clasped her close within my arms, kissing her with fast falling tears. Slowly the drops rose in her clear eyes, but she smiled and said,

"I don't feel now that I am one to be pitied, because a brightness is shining through my lot, and hope is lifting the cross from my heart.

After tea, Minnie said to me in her gentle, appealing way,

"Shall I spend an hour with the children, Kate? I'll hear you read to them."

"No; you take my place, Mrs. Henry," I answered. "It will do your heart good to read and talk with them. They ask so many earnest, beautiful questions. I always feel as if I had drained some health-giving elixir, after the hour in the nursery. I must write this evening."

Mrs. Henry took her little flock up stairs. During her aberration she had been in the habit of going to the nursery with us, when we read: she would always curl down at my feet, and listen like a child. I did not wish to go with her now, for I thought she might feel like talking with the children, and I feared I might be a restraint. Then I felt that it would do her actual good to fulfil the duty. The nursery was opposite the school-room; when I sought the latter, I looked in passing, into the children's room. The evening was warm, and the doors were open. Freddie in his snowy night-dress, sat in his mother's lap, leaning his curly head against her bosom; his bright eyes were full of interest. Nellie sat with Jessie on a low seat, looking up with soft earnest eyes. After I was seated to write, Minnie's low, sweet tones were borne to my ear,—then the evening prayer, —then words of loving encouragement.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The last day before my departure North was waning,—had waned. The still influences of the night were upon me. I was alone once more with the Infinite, and I prayed, "Oh, Father! lay thy hand upon me with a blessing, and bend me to the duties of my lot. I thirst for a diviner air to bathe my spirit in. Teach me to cast the past behind me, with its sorrowful weaknesses, its resentments, its selfishness. I tremble lest my heart may be shaken with kneener woe than ever. Oh, take me to thine arms of love, hold me there when the terrible, angry blasts of life almost kill me. If I must drink a sorrowful cup, do Thou help me to drain it!"

My nightly prayer was done, and yet I could not rest. The unknown future seemed rushing towards me with a mighty tread, and I could not stay it. Bright, or dark? There the curtain fell. Perchance I might come back. With half fearful, half hopeful eye, I turned toward a life at Cousin Mary's.

At daybreak the children came running to my room with little presents, with kisses, tears and clasping arms—and I blessed and kissed them with a yearning heart. I feared I might be forsaking my Master's vineyard if I did not come back, and yet I would not be bound by any promise. Breakfast over, we gathered on the great front porch. The children were to ride with me as far as the railroad depot.

They stowed themselves in the carriage, and Jep stood ready for me. Mrs. Henry, Miss Baldwin and I were drowned in tears, and were saying a great many kind words, when Mr. Henry passed through the hall humming a favorite tune. "A terrible fuss!" he exclaimed with a sarcastic smile. "Good-bye, Miss Hamilton." He shook hands with me. We all immediately regained our fortitude, and I left my Southern home.

* * * * *

Varying emotions crowded upon me, as once more my foot pressed a Boston pavement. I arrived a day before I was expected, and found no one to meet me, which for a moment made me feel that women were an inefficient race; a feeling which had possessed me during the whole journey. But a cordial looking old gentleman, seeing my condition, took charge of me with such good will, I was quite glad to need his care. I was at length safely stowed in a carriage, and went rumbling through the familiar streets, which were flooded with afternoon sunshine. I looked with eager eyes at the passers-by, wondering if among the many, I should see the face of a friend. Suddenly, like a vision, the face which was uppermost in my thoughts came in sight. Mr. Cardover came out of a bookstore. I drew back instantly, with a rushing in my heart, that convinced me I had gained little by a year's absence. It seemed to me that the beloved face had grown more spiritual, more noble than ever. He looked casually into the carriage, and saw me. A brilliant smile of surprise and recognition passed over his countenance. I bowed in return. The carriage rolled on, and brought me to the dear old house. My trunk was placed on the steps, the coachman whirled away, and yet I stood wondering whether they were all well. I leaned over, and looked in the parlor window, whence came sounds of merriment and music. Walter stood laughing by Lilly Cardover,

teaching her to play on the flute. Gertrude stood in front of Effie Hartly, with outstretched hands, and entreating eyes, which pantomime terminated in a waltz between them. Grace sat at the old piano, playing very fast, and looking around with a laughing face at the waltzers and the little flute player, while Josephine clapped her hands, and started off on a dance by herself.

I hastily entered, and stood in their midst. Grace saw me first, and bounded from her seat, overturning it of course. I was clasped to her generous heart, and our first laughter gave way to tears, which again gave way to laughter, when Lilly exclaimed, "Oh, look at Miss Kate's bonnet!" When Cousin Mary came in, it was difficult for her to recognize the forlorn inhabitant who was laughing and crying within the crooked bonnet. How cheery was the reunion.

"What do you think of Effie?" whispered Grace.

"She looks like a lovely girl," I replied. I thought not as lovely as Grace, whose face beamed with a sort of celestial sunshine. There was an atmosphere of health and joy, an exulting strength breathing forth from the group, that seemed inspiriting after the patient resignation which I had left in my Southern home. There is of a truth a *sphere* encompassing every one, which produces an impression, even if words be not spoken. Why do we turn with shrinking ofttimes from kindest expressions, when we have no tangible reason to doubt their sincerity? An unseen contradiction is breathing out from the nature which speaks so fairly. I saw with delight that the anxious look had left Effie's blue eyes,—that a quiet trust reposed on her childlike lips. She had nestled down like a bird in her new nest, believing there was charity on earth, and regeneration for the most sinful.

Lilly and Josephine conferred together in whispers, and then left the room. "Isn't that Lilly a glorious child?" asked Walter, with enthusiasm.

"Yes. Do you intend educating her for a wife?" I questioned.

"Not exactly; but she's the most enchanting little creature I ever saw. She'll be worth a dozen Judith Mortons!" He added the last sentence in an under tone.

The charming children soon came back, with Cousin John between them. He greeted me with apparent surprise, to please the children, who had made a great secret of their object in bringing him home. He had grown portly, and good-natured, but was not less pompous than usual in his general carriage.

As I was going up stairs to humanize a little, after the dust and fatigue of the journey, I heard Cousin Mary (considerate mortal!) empowering Miss McConkey to go to a fruit-shop and buy an incredible variety of delicious things for tea. As each thing was named to the fair maid, she would exclaim, "She likes them, does she?—yes, I'll get 'em." When the list was finished, she uttered, "Oh, cracky!"

"Mary, you must not say 'oh, cracky,'" gravely replied her mistress. I laughed to think a year had not improved Mary McConkey's manners one iota.

It was a happy party that sat down to the evening board. If life would stop at the bright places, instead of hurrying on ceaselessly, how many groups should we see reposing in the sunshine.

"Will Mr. Waldron be here to-night?" I asked of Grace, as we sought the parlor after tea. She answered in the affirmative, and went on talking about him until I forgot that the world was any thing but a beautiful rose-garden filled with Cupids. She suddenly ceased speaking, and looked towards the door, her heart softly rising and falling, as the sweet vermilion fluttered to her cheek. I looked too, and Mr. Waldron came in, so happy, so handsome. I saw *that* within his eyes, which the poverty of language cannot

express—*Love*. He spoke first with me, and then took the little hand of Grace, for one moment.

"Am I good enough for Grace, Cousin Kate?" he asked, laughing.

"I think so!" I replied, "or you will be, if you don't monopolize her, and make her friends feel that they are in the way, as lovers always do."

"I intend to be very considerate," he returned, with the same happy laugh. "You may drive me away whenever you think I am bordering on selfishness."

"May I? thank you!" I did thank him inwardly, for the frank and cordial manner, which instantly set me at ease, and assured me that Grace's husband would be one to trust as a part of herself.

"You never *will* let Grace settle down, and find no world out of her own family, as thousands do, will you?" I asked. "You won't let her grow old, and forget how every body feels?"

"No," he answered, with affected gravity. "She shall be young enough to sympathize with you, when—"

Miss Cardover opened the door, and stood with a smiling face there, exclaiming, "Now, isn't it unmerciful in me to come the very instant Kate gets home?"

Our heartfelt embrace would have assured any one that it would have been unmerciful had she stayed away. Mr. Cardover come forward and met me kindly, saying, "I suggested that it might be wiser to wait until you were rested, but Elizabeth would not consent."

"I am very glad you came," I returned, sitting down by Miss Cardover.

"I am so glad you came, to be here at the wedding!" she said, in an under tone, giving my hand an extra pressure. "You know you and Pliny are to officiate."

"Yes; that seems to be the arrangement." After we

had talked very fast for a while, I gave my seat to Cousin Mary, and went to Walter. "Don't Effie look contented?" he whispered. I added my rejoicing to his at her tranquil fate. His face lighted up with affection as he spoke of her daily efforts to win the esteem of those around her—and not their esteem only, but she strove to walk in a pure and true path.

"And how do *you* pass your time, Walter?" I asked.

"Oh, like the good Samaritan, of course!" he answered, returning instantly from his beautiful, earnest tone to a jesting one. "I am going to China in a month or two, as supercargo on board of a vessel."

"Is it possible? How long shall you be gone?"

"Probably a year and a half. I shall want to see Lilly by that time, to ascertain whether she is growing up worthy of me!"

"Conceited as ever!" I responded, laughing.

Miss Cardover rose to go. As I turned from Walter my eyes encountered Mr. Cardover's, and his earnest look had over me an irresistible power—I could not wholly translate it; it was grave, yet full of interest.

We parted, with jests and light laughter. As if by intuition the whole family left Grace and her lover in the parlor alone.

"Oh, come in!" said Grace, as I followed behind the train that sought the dining-room.

"We shall have time to talk to-morrow. I am tired." And so they were left to dream "Love's young dream" by themselves.

When morning broke over us, and I lay beside Grace in the old, familiar room, I longed to ask her about Mr. Cardover, but I did not.

"Would you believe it, Kate?" she asked, "Elizabeth Cardover was once engaged to Horace, and she broke the

engagement herself." Do you see how she *could?* A man like Horace!"

"How long since was it?" I inquired, remembering the heart story Miss Cardover once told me.

"Oh, it was a great many years ago, when they were very young."

I wondered if through Miss Cardover's noble heart no strain of sadness went, when she looked upon the lovers, so radiant as they were in their happy abandon.

Weeks glided away. The wedding was to take place in October. We were busy beyond all description, sewing, running down street to match trimmings, and sacrificing ourselves to the jerks of an energetic dressmaker. Miss Cardover came in almost every day, and she often laid aside her bonnet to help us: she thought it was hardly worth while to be so industrious, as we expected to live a short time after the wedding. One day as we sat sewing thus, James Bedell suddenly entered.

"Why, James!" we all exclaimed, "when did you come?"

"Yesterday," he replied, greeting us separately as we rose from our work. Gertrude blushed very deeply when he took her hand, and in his eyes it was easy to read a gratified interest in her welcome, which was modest and quiet.

"And now, what have you come back for so soon?" asked Miss Cardover, "and why did you not come to our house immediately?"

"In the first place," he returned, "I had business which required me to see the best chemist in Boston immediately, and after I had seen him, it was too late to go to you, aunt. I have just returned from your house."

"Shall you stay long with us, James?" asked Miss Cardover, bending her affectionate eyes upon him.

"A few weeks probably," he answered.

After tea, our regular guests dropped in. These were Mr. Waldron, and Mr. Seth Cardover; but this time they were accompanied by Pliny. As the evening waned, it was clear that Gertrude appeared very charming in James's eyes. It made me feel lonely when I looked at them—it seemed sad that it was so easy to forget old affections.

Grace and Gertrude sang some sweet old ballads, accompanied by Mr. Waldron. Cousin Mary, true to her industrious habits, sat down by the table with her sewing. I took a skein of silk and placed it upon the back of a chair to wind.

"May I hold it for you?" asked Pliny Cardover, coming to me.

"If you please!" I answered. The feeling of restraint I had often had in his presence left me, and we talked as gayly as the others did. The universal hubbub that arose after the music ceased, seemed to be infectious.

"Let us have a little dance!" said Grace, turning her sweet eyes upon Mr. Waldron. "You don't think it is wicked, Horace, when it is not carried to extremes?"

"Oh, no," he replied, "it is not a new accomplishment to me," and he took Grace's willing hand, and led her out on the floor.

Walter took his place at the piano. Mr. Bedell sought Gertrude as a partner, Pliny said "come?" and I went. Effie had left the room, so Mr. Seth Cardover invited Cousin Mary.

"Why, I have not danced in ten years!" she replied, drawing back.

"And I have not in fifteen, Mrs. Rodman!" retorted Mr. Seth. "I look upon it in the light of a duty—we ought to amuse the others."

Cousin Mary consented, and the evening flitted away

in a hearty merriment that left us feeling exceedingly well acquainted with each other.

The next day we were to go to the new house which the bridal pair were furnishing, to put up parlor curtains. Mr. Waldron was coming to go with us. When the knocker sounded Grace and I were in our room: she was completing her toilette.

"Run down, Kate, and see who it is!" she said.

I accordingly went, and found Mr. Cardover.

"Come in," I said, opening the parlor door, and entering. "Grace and I are going to the new house as soon as Mr. Waldron comes, but Mrs. Rodman and Miss Hartly are at home."

"Suppose I were going to the new house too, Kate?"

He had called me Miss Kate before.

"That would be very agreeable."

"Would it?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Here is a bouquet for you, Miss Kate!"

"How beautiful it is!" I said, taking it: it was composed of white rose buds, with glossy leaves of box.

"Do you think a bouquet perfect without red?" asked Mr. Cardover.

"No; why didn't you put a pink rose-bud in?"

"I feared it might not suit you: *love* colors the white rose-red," the last words he spoke in a low tone: a blush went thrilling through me.

"Shall I place a red rose among the flowers?" he asked in the same tone. I felt that his eyes were upon me, pressing downward the lids I could not lift up.

"Aye!" and he took my hand. At this moment I heard Grace tripping down stairs: she came in the parlor.

"Mr. Waldron has not come?" she said, inquiringly.

"No; he desired me to say that he was engaged at pre-

sent. He will meet us at the house," said Mr. Cardover. "You see, Grace, I have availed myself of your invitation to assist in your housekeeping arrangements."

"Yes, why shouldn't you be useful?" responded Grace, gayly. "I asked you last evening, but I had no idea that you would condescend to accept my invitation." She turned to me. "Come, Kitty, get ready; we are waiting for you."

I hastened up stairs for my bonnet and gloves. I half thought from Grace's manner, that she began to suspect my heart history, for a beautiful light shone upon me from her clear eyes as I left the room—a new, astonished light it was!

Ere long we started on our walk. A warm September sun shone down upon us; it was a dreamy, halcyon day, suggestive only of joy. The new house was situated in a retired street: two fine elm trees stood in front of it, and the grass in the small area was smooth and green, from frequent cutting. The dwelling itself was not large; it was plain, and less handsome than I had supposed it would be, for Mr. Waldron had the reputation of wealth. When Grace opened the hall door, it seemed like ushering us into a little temple of domestic peace,—so new, and bright, and cheerful it looked.

"What do you think of our house?" asked Grace, as we stood in the cosy parlors, treading upon a carpet which was a garden of rich roses and shaded greenness; we deluded ourselves into the belief that it was a flower-covered prairie we pressed.

"It is very charming! the house is pleasant, the furniture tasteful; but Grace, I supposed you would be a little more extravagant. I thought Mr. Waldron would put his bird into the most splendid cage to be found."

Grace smiled and answered, "Horace has unpaid debts

on his hands. It is against his principles to be generous before he is just. I was not willing that any extravagance of ours should delay the settlement of those accounts."

"That is right. You are beginning the world beautifully. Every thing is charming, and when those curtains are hung, the effect will be finer than that produced in thousands of more costly homes. Only I thought that money-worshippers would not discover beauty, unless a high price assured them of its existence."

We went to work with hearty good will, assisting Mr. Cardover in putting up the embroidered curtains. After they were hung, it took us a long time to arrange the folds with that high degree of carelessness which we deemed necessary. When at last we were perfectly satisfied, we took our station in the centre of the parlors, and gazed around with smiling lips, observing the general effect. All the colors in the rooms were sweetly blended, the graceful trifles, and one or two exquisite statuettes gave forth, as it were, an expression of the characters of Mr. Waldron and Grace. The western sunset poured through the lace curtains in a golden mist. Mr. Waldron came in as we were still entranced in observation and pleasant thoughts. When his glance of heavenly tenderness rested on his betrothed bride, it seemed as if some sweet, spiritual sunshine cast a mellowed glory over the new home, and over each heart then folded within it. We had half a mind to take our tea in the conservatory, which opened from the back parlor, only we had no provisions. Mr. Waldron proposed that we should all go marketing together in family style. It was finally agreed that the two gentlemen should sally forth, and bring us something to set a table with. As soon as we had closed the door after them, we ran laughing to our duties. By dint of great exertion we got a table from the basement into the conservatory, and laid it with a snowy cloth and dishes; after which

we descended to the yard, and gathered some fresh flowers to ornament the table with.

"I fear the congregation would think it ought to be invited to our little repast," said Grace, laughing," if it should be discovered what a nice time we are having!"

"It will be time for you to put on the airs of a minister's wife when you are really married, Grace," I said. "Do let us enjoy ourselves now, and be just as nonsensical as we can."

"Don't it seem perfectly wonderful, Kate, that this dear house is ours? and that—that—well! isn't it all surprising and beautiful?" Grace laughed and blushed, and seated herself on the window-step communicating with the parlors. What a lovely picture she was in her happy sweetness. She looked so fondly around her home.

"Let us go up stairs," she said, suddenly rising. "you have not been up there." She took me first to Mr. Waldron's study. Above his writing-table hung the picture of Hope, which bore so strong a resemblance to Grace.

"Horace would have it in his study," she said in reply to my smiling glance. "Do you see, Kate, that every thing in this room has been brought from the study at Blooming Hill? I have had every thing arranged the same, because—"

"Because what?"

"Why, when we visited at Mr. Waldron's parents, you remember we went into Horace's study. When I saw that picture, and met Horace's look, I felt as if his whole soul were revealed to me—I realized how noble and great his love for me was. It was the happiest moment of my life. So I love to preserve the memory of the room, and of that time."

"I had no dream that you loved him then, Grace."

"I scarcely knew when I began to love him myself," she said.

We went into the other rooms, and I admired every thing with all my heart. Finally Grace took me to the guest chamber.

"This is for you, Kitty," she said.

"Oh, what a lovely bureau, and wash-stand, and bedstead and carpet!" I exclaimed.

We heard the night-key turn in the front door, and ran down stairs to see what we were to have for tea. Mr. Waldron came in bearing a new willow basket loaded down with something. We all fluttered into the conservatory behind him. When he deposited his basket on the floor, Grace opened it and drew forth first a watermelon, then peaches, then grapes, then a small paper.

"What is this?" she asked.

"Oh, that is tea. I can make a fire down stairs, can't I?" said Mr. Waldron.

"There is nothing to make it with," we both replied.

"Cold water is much better," returned the two gentlemen.

Grace came across a fruit cake, then another paper. "What is this?" she asked, raising her laughing eyes to her lover.

"That is smoked salmon," he replied. "We saw a man in a grocery cutting it off, and that reminded us that we ought to have some."

"No bread and butter," she said in an under tone to me, as I knelt down by her. Our arrangements were soon made, and we sat down to the table.

"How perfectly charming it is to satisfy the appetite on extras!" said Grace, as the gentlemen seemed to miss the "staff of life," with some surprise. They wisely praised every thing we had, and refrained from hinting that we

needed any thing more. I doubt if any of us cared much what we had. We seemed shut in from the world, too happy and merry ever to care about leaving the new home. But the hour warned us that we must go, and very reluctantly we prepared to do so. When the conservatory was restored to its primitive order, and we had darkened the rooms, we left the house, and wended our way to Cousin Mary's.

CHAPTER XXX.

The next day was set apart to make the wedding cake. I devoted myself to other household duties, as I did not understand the business. While I was dusting the parlor, Grace came in with a clean gingham apron on, and her sleeves rolled up from her snowy arms.

"Kitty, I wish you would help me," she said.

"I don't know how, Grace. There is enough for me to do."

"But you ought to learn. Pliny likes home-made cake, I think!" She looked at me so archly, I could not help blushing and joining her gay laugh.

"Some quiet day, Grace," I said, I am going to tell you all my heart; every bit of it, from beginning to end."

"Perhaps I have been learning something of it lately. Ah, I am so glad!" She threw her arms around me with impulsive warmth, and kissed me.

"Oh, don't be so premature," I entreated, releasing myself, and beginning to dust a chair.

"Kate, Miss Cardover wished me to send for her, if we needed her to-day. Will you go for her? Pliny has been gone to his business for hours by this time."

I consented to go, and soon found myself standing on the stone porch of Miss Cardover's house. It was near

mid-day, and very warm. The blind door was so turned as to admit a current of air into the hall. The parlor door was open. I heard voices proceeding thence as I rung the street bell. No one came immediately, and I heard Pliny's name mentioned; then Miss Cardover said,

"Brother thinks Kate would make an excellent wife; he likes her, and admires her. He says if he could get up the same kind of feeling for her that he had for Grace, he would offer himself to-morrow."

How the humiliating blushes burned in my cheeks as I heard this. How the hot waves of indignation rolled through me. The expression, "if he could get up the same kind of feeling," galled me to the soul. I felt as if I could set foot upon my living heart, and keep it for ever still, rather than to be *thus* accepted by Pliny Cardover. I saw a servant coming through the hall. I lowered my veil to conceal the agony of pride and passion that consumed me. I delivered my message, and hastened from the house, before Miss Cardover could ascertain that I had been there. I went home mechanically, and after I had thrown my white rose-buds out of the window, I proceeded to fulfil all my duties. Every one about the house was too busy to be observing. I knew that when I received that little bunch of flowers, my long kept secret escaped me—it was written in my face. I would have given worlds to have recalled that five minutes.

Evening came. The air was so balmy and delicious, that nearly all the members of the family went out for a walk. I crept up to my room, and sat down in the pale twilight. It glided away, and the stars stole out one by one. Effie came into the room.

"Oh, Kate!" she exclaimed, in surprise, "I thought you had gone out to walk with the others."

"I am indulging in day dreams," I answered bitterly.

"Mr. Cardover is down stairs. He inquired for you."

"I don't care about going down. You will do just as well, Effie."

"But he asked for you, Kate. You ought to go down. Shall I bring you a light? Do you want to arrange your hair?" she asked kindly.

"No, it does not matter how it looks. Is there a light in the parlor?"

"No, the street lamp shines in sufficiently. The musquitoes are too thick to have a lamp burning in the parlor. Here is a letter for you, Kate."

I took it, and saw from the direction that it was from Mrs. Henry. I ran my eye over the contents.

"I am going back South to teach, Effie," I said, as I left the room. I did not wait to hear her exclamations. When I entered the parlor Mr. Cardover rose and bowed, and then resumed his seat by the window, which was opposite the street lamp. The rays fell upon his white forehead, and displayed in bold relief the nobly shaped head. I sought a seat by the other window, which was in the shade. Cousin Mary came in from her walk, a moment after I had entered the room. When she saw that Mr. Cardover and I were alone, and probably *felt* that we were not at ease, she would have passed into the sitting-room. I called her back, saying,

"I have just received a letter from Mrs. Henry, Cousin Mary."

"Well?" she said inquiringly, for I had expressed myself in an undecided way about going back, whenever it had been mentioned.

"I think I shall return to them. They are all very urgent that I should do so."

"But, Kate, I shall be so lonely without Grace," said Cousin Mary, entreatingly.

"Yes, but you were willing I should go before, because

you thought I might be useful. I am sure now that I am more needed there than here. This is *home*."

Cousin Mary left the room quietly.

"Why *do* you go, Kate?" asked Mr. Cardover earnestly.

"Because I want to see a little more of the world, I suppose," I answered lightly.

Mr. Cardover crossed the room, and sat down by me. "Will Kitty go with me to see the world?" he asked, taking my hand in his, and bending his head, while his tones thrilled through me electrically.

"No!" I answered scarcely above a breath, drawing away my hand.

"Aye?" he said, bowing his ear to my lips.

Again I could scarcely frame the word "No."

"Why?" he questioned, still with his bent head, and in that same deep tone, as if the drapery had been swept away from our souls, and he would not allow it to fall back again. I could not speak. I felt my pride and courage dying. I longed to be away in my own room, where I could yield to the emotion that flooded my being. I could not move. I sat quiet, with rapidly beating heart.

"Don't you love me, Kitty?"

I dared not lie. I felt that our inmost souls were in the presence of the Infinite.

"Don't you love me, Kitty?" Again his tremulous hand took mine.

"I esteem you!" I forced utterance to the words.

"Don't you *love* me, Kitty?" he repeated. Oh, how infinitely tender it sounded. My heart was drooping beneath the magnetism. Almost I had yielded, but I clung to the bitter memory of the morning, and it gave me strength.

"I do not love you well enough to marry you!" I said, withdrawing my hand more hastily than before. I rose, and

fled to my chamber. I cast myself upon my knees at the bedside, drooping beneath the power that impelled me to go to him again. I clasped my hands, and restrained the impulse. I heard the street door close. Oh, then I felt that I was mad and wild—that I had sold my heart to misery, and had heaped upon my head a weight under which I should die. To be near him ever more—to be thought worthy of his choice—it should have satisfied me. I remembered that there was a stern decision in Mr. Cardover's character, a haughtiness not wholly extinguished by the cultivation of nobler qualities, and I despaired of ever hearing again such pleading tones from him. The intolerable night passed! With the dawn I said, "How to live?" But the impulse which had nerved me to slay my peace, helped me to bear it in silence. When I arose, I looked with anxiety into the glass, to see if my face betrayed the anguish within. Haggard as I looked, I wondered still to see my brow calm, my eyes quiet and tearless, albeit a fire burned in their depths. All day long we were busy. For two weeks we were busy, and every evening others came to see us, but not Mr. Cardover.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A DARKENED room: a miserable mother weeping beside a cradle, where lay an infant child, just recovering from fearful convulsions. Scarcely has the purple blackness receded from the face: scarcely have the contorted limbs drooped into weak passiveness: scarcely have the rolling eyeballs sunk into their suddenly hollowed sockets. The mother sits by and gazes, while the cold sweat of fear is yet unwiped from her brow. "Oh, life, terrible thou art!" she groans in her helplessness; "and death, how far more terrible!" The pallid brow of Judith drops between her hands: she is not strong enough for the life-battle: she cannot understand it: she sees no meaning in it: but she gropes her way, and madly wars with gigantic ills, beating herself against prisoning fate, and reading in the Great Hereafter a cold, shadowy nothingness, compared with the living present. "Shall Isa be borne from her sight? Shall her matchless limbs be straightened for the coffin? her gleeful voice hushed by the ghastly tyrant? her glorious, loving eyes robbed of their shine? her baby lips despoiled of their smile? and the sweet dimples pillowed under the sod, with the soft, curling hair? Shall the pretty hand cease to stroke her cheek, with winsome laugh? Ah! her love was innocent, absorbing! Would it not have been undying? Had it not kept the mother more holy than she could have been without it?

Had it not smitten the rock, until more healing waters had gushed through the barren nature? And now can a God of mercy take her?—take her while professing love and compassion for his miserable, pain-stricken creatures?"

Judith sprung wildly to her feet; her reverie broken and fled. Again the little one writhed in frightful convulsions, and her mother's energetic hand ministered to her—but vainly; the agony went on during its appointed time, and then the shrunken sufferer relapsed into pitiful slumber, destroying Judith's very spirit with the conviction of her uselessness. The servants stood around and gazed upon their mistress with pity: a cold and haughty mistress she had been, never caring to learn whether their hearts were filled with joy or pain. Angelo, the servant whom Judith suspected of communicating with his master, spoke in a low entreating tone to her. She merely bowed, and he hastily left the room. The other servants guessed the import of his remark, and began to steal from the chamber.

"Stay!" said Judith briefly, and they came back. It was not an hour ere the husband and father entered the chamber: Judith did not look at him, although his first glance fell upon her, filled with eager inquiry. He went and knelt beside the cradle: that pinched, suffering face struck to the quick; he bowed his head and wept, as men weep when their strong natures give way. The heart of the wife grew silent and calm: she sat and watched the death-shadow as it hovered on the countenance: quietly she wiped away the foam as it gathered on the lips: softly she took the little, beloved hands as they suddenly started up in their last struggle, and then when it was all over, she bowed her face, and kissed every feature—tearlessly. She went away in an inner room to weep alone. Marie prepared the empty form for its little white dress.

Days passed away: the funeral was over, and the averted eyes of the wife had not encountered those of her husband.

"Farewell *again*, Judith?" he asked.

"Farewell!" she answered, still without looking towards him. He read her grief in tone and face: it was that morning that the child had been buried: he comprehended the chill mourning of a deserted house; when friends are gone, and life, grown cold and fearful, resumes its accustomed routine. He trusted to its appalling, subduing sway over that proud woman's heart, and he left her.

A week had gone, and the lonely wife and childless mother had sunk under her sorrow; fortitude she had none; for the first time it had forsaken her: she bowed under the woe, which had struck down her idols: she was but a crushed weeper, rebellious, prayerful sometimes, and then blasphemous —hopeless! Yet, *less* selfish, far as she still was from spiritual sympathy. Her friends were kind, but they were worldly, and only bade her not grieve: they showed her no reason why she should be comforted. Mixed with every prayer, came spirits of defiance. Why should she thus be stricken? With the intensity of a selfish nature, she had concentrated every good and pure emotion upon her child: the little one had taught her her womanly nature, but at the same time came the impulse to sacrifice others to this child. Marie's health, life, rest were of light import, compared with a wayward fancy of Isa's. Suddenly a thought struck Madam Benzoni: she recollected having seen a venerable Catholic priest frequently, who seemed less hardened over by a debased worldliness than his compeers. She called Angelo, and sent for him. He came! she knelt before him, and cleansed her soul by a confession, she could hardly pour out to her God, who seemed so distant, so tyrannical, so powerful. The priest was of a simple nature, who amid poisons drained the honey of godlike charity; he rested his aged

hand upon the bent head of the mourner, and talked to her from his heart, rather than from his faith, until her anguish was lulled and soothed by his paternal words. She related her history to him; all the struggles and agonies which had never before been breathed in human ear. The confession did her good, it broke down the hard walls which secretiveness builds about the heart: it was a blessing to her to indulge that frankness which should grow with time, rather than decrease. The priest left her, and her weeping was more quiet,—the oil of consolation had fallen upon the waves of her spirit, "tempest tossed and not comforted," as they had been. The shadowy night drew on; cold, white shadows seemed to haunt the room. Lights were brought in, and still the ghostly desolation within her being, was impressed upon every thing around her. Where were the soft arms of her child? Alas! beneath the mould, where she must some day lie, until a pitiful God opened the graves. Poor Judith, with her sad want of spirituality, could never separate the garment from the real man. She shudderingly went to her Bible for one little drop of consolation, and it came: she knew not how or why, but it came and beamed around her, a warming light. She read, "Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that shall bring a man peace at the last." From her spirit broke entreating prayers that she might win the jewels which bring peace at last. How often would we weep with pity if we could look in upon the weak prayers of cold and selfish hearts, when struck by arrows which gayety cannot ward off, neither all the light brilliancy of a worldly atmosphere.

The door of Judith's room softly opened, and Benzoni came in, bending upon her his dark eyes. She met them, all tearful as were her own. She rose, and gazed out into the starry darkness of the night. Her husband went to her side, not with faltering step of fear, as once before, but with

confidence. His eyes had gleamed upon her like those of a friend in her dreariness, but she could not stretch forth her hand when he came; pride still was too powerful. His presence was in her heart, although she turned no recognizing look to the handsome face near her: back upon her welled her former wild idolatry: she sunk beneath it: she thirsted for words of tenderness from the father of her child. He spoke at last, low, and in a voice whose music and pathos she had never heard equalled.

"Dear Judith, have you forgiven me yet? Have I suffered enough for the wrong I did you?"

She clasped her white hands over her face; her frame shook with wild sobs.

"Beloved wife! poor stricken mother! do you heed me at last?" he murmured, passing his strong arm around her trembling form. She started back, and gazed at him: she spoke with subdued accent.

"You struck me to the earth once: dare I trust myself to you again?"

"How can you doubt me, dearest?"

"Have you more mercy and forbearance now, Giovanni?" she asked entreatingly.

"I have a love which has been purified by suffering. A patience which has been won by suffering also."

She laid her hand within his; and then with passionate abandonment she clasped her arms around his neck: he folded her to his heart, and lifted up her face, showering it with tears and kisses: forehead, eyes, and lips he pressed: and then the beautiful face hid itself in his breast, as if a shelter had been found at last. Poor, weary one! she sought the shelter of a heart more unprincipled than her own: she believed in promises of love, when that love had but an unstable foundation. She looked up in his superb eyes, melting with tenderness, and did not read in their soft shine

the roving heart within, which might yet wander on to another face, when hers had again wearied him. She held to her bosom flowers of love, never dreaming the wreath might conceal a cross, which should be nailed to her naked soul. None of this did she see: he was now given as the consoler of her dark hour: through the present, he poured the rosy tide of refreshment and hope: he taught her faith in the beautiful and glad, when she might have lapsed into unloving despair, had the clouds still brooded above her.

"Dearest, do you think you were entirely faultless?" he asked, smoothing the careless ringlets, and then pressing one to his lips.

"Oh! no, Giovanni, I was thoughtless and wilful: I have learned better now. Do you forgive me too?"

"Yes, birdie!" he responded.

CHAPTER XXXII.

It was the marriage day! So holy it seemed, that I stole from our chamber ere Grace had prayed. I felt that she ought to kneel in her maiden loveliness alone before her Creator the last time. When an hour after I went back to her, the soft light shining through her face made me feel that she was bathed in the glory of love—both Divine and human love.

"Oh!" she uttered fervently, "I hope that I may make a good wife—a devoted minister's wife!" and she clasped her hands softly, as if entreatingly. "But, dearest Kate, I ought not to look forward with this expectation of boundless joy—I ought to feel as if I could give up my happiness for a season, if it should be required It seems, if it should be taken from me, that I should be like a flower broken from the stalk."

"But why think it may?" I asked.

"I do not feel as if it will," she replied with a radiant smile, "but I thirst to feel aright about it—I desire to feel hourly, momently, as if it is the gift of our loving Lord. Gratitude demands of me that my heart should ever be opened to the Supreme Giver, and ever ready to kneel and offer its joy to Him, for He would not take it without reason. I believe there are few on earth who have realized such

gracious happiness as fills my life. It is different from any joy I ever experienced before. It is so holy, and its serene gladness seems as if drawn from far-off Paradise—and thither it seems to tend also. I love to shut my eyes sometimes upon the intervening earth life, and look onward to the time when I shall wander through an Eden landscape, with a splendid angel beside me, and that angel, Horace!"

"Your life must be very beautiful!" I sighed. "You are *fully* beloved. How easy it will be for you to bear the small disquietudes of every-day existence."

"Yes, it seems as if a blessed patience is born within me. I can stretch out my hand with a smile to meet some daily cares. I am eager to bear them wisely, for I feel that I ought to do, oh, so much! while I am crowned with his heavenly light and love."

"You give me a blessing, dear Grace, for I realize that your joy is a reality as well as the pains that sometimes come to us." I said this, and I felt it as I spoke, but with the next moment a deep, mighty yearning to put away the sorrowful, and to clasp the joyful, prevailed within me.

We went down to breakfast, and then returned to our chamber to make bridal wreaths. Any one who has had a wedding in the house, knows how impossible it is for the bride to be secluded. Cousin Mary, Gertrude, and Effie followed by Josephine, came to look at the wedding ornaments, and at Grace.

"She will be a bride this evening!" said Josephine meditatively.

"Yes," responded Cousin Mary, fondly smoothing the soft brown hair of Grace, and dropping a tear upon it.

"Grace," asked Gertrude, "you will always love us as well as if you were not married, won't you?"

"Yes, dear!" replied Grace, with a slightly quivering lip. Even Cousin John came up to look at the bride's

snowy dress, which had just been spread upon the bed. He jested about our looking so serious.

"Cousin Kate, are you going to wear a veil like the bride?" Josephine pushed back her golden curls as she looked up.

"No, little daisy. I shall only wear a white dress very much like Grace's."

"And shall you go with them to Blooming Hill?"

"Yes, I think so!"

Evening at length came. The house was brilliantly lighted, and lavishly decorated with flowers. It fell to my lot to arrange the rich, wavy masses of the bride's hair; to fasten the veil, and crown her with the wreath; and while I did it, no festal thoughts and dreams sang to my heart. Grace looked like a blessed vision from the upper world, when the bridal dress floated around her, and the mist-like veil waved past her rose-tinted cheek. I knelt before her to gather the skirt of her dress in even waves, and I could not forbear kissing the little satin slipper that poised itself daintily upon a cricket for a moment. She was lovely within also, a beautiful human being from inmosts to outermosts. I could have knelt long before her, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, impressing upon my aching heart the soothing picture which foreshadowed heaven. But all impulses had been hushed at my heart for many weary days.

"Let us lead you down!" besought Gertrude and Josephine, ranging themselves on each side of her. They went down to the guest-chamber, where Mr. Waldron and Mr. Cardover were. Effie Hartly employed her tasteful fingers in arranging my toilette. Excitement had given me a little color. If I had been happy, I should have been more than satisfied with my appearance, for I had never looked so well.

Josephine came fluttering into the room. "Oh, how splendid!" she exclaimed. "I wish I were a bridesmaid,

or a bride. Mother says, will you please come down, Kate, if you are ready. She says you must practise taking your places, so that you won't make any mistakes, when you get married before the company."

My heart beat violently at the thought of meeting Mr. Cardover, whom I had not seen since the evening that I rejected him. I sat down to collect myself, to gain a calm exterior; but every instant the volume of feeling I had suppressed all day, grew stronger, until it seemed more than I could master. I dared not let tears fall, for how would a tearful bridesmaid look? At length I followed close behind Effie and Josephine. The family were all gathered in the guest-chamber, which was not as light as the rest of the house; low tones broke on my ear as I neared the room, such tones as loving hearts utter at deep moments of their lives. Cousin Mary was speaking with Grace, whose bosom heaved with heart-restrained emotion. Mr. Waldron gazed on her anxiously as he saw that her heart was realizing the dear ties she was breaking. Mr. Cardover stood beside him. He bowed, lowering his eyes as I entered. I went and stood by Cousin Mary.

With smiles tremulous as tears, we practised the marriage ceremony—the clergyman spoke quietly with the bride and bridegroom. Then he preceded us to the parlor; we entered the silent assemblage with downcast eyes, and took our places: the ceremony was performed, the ring encircled the finger of the newly-wedded wife, and then over the silence sounded from the lips of the white-haired minister these words: "May the Lord bless you and keep you: may the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: may the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

As this blessing fell with thrilling solemn utterance, sudden, quiet tears fell also: tears that dropped from the eyes

of the bride, and from the guests. We knelt in prayer, and in hushed, holy weeping the tumult passed away from my spirit. When we arose, and warm hands grasped ours, and kind eyes smiled a benediction, it was as if a shower had passed, leaving the heavens tranquil. Gay and smiling words were on our lips all the evening, even to the end, and never once did I catch a recognizing gleam from the face that bent forward so often with courtesy to others.

* * * * * *

A few days had passed, and Grace was installed as mistress of her new home. The minister and his bride were to give a large party to his congregation. This seemed very charming to Grace; she desired in her own house to meet the many in whose best welfare she was interested—she desired to turn towards "the flock" with a loving and earnest spirit—how little they comprehended as yet the pure and strong soul that had adopted them with a devotion equal to their pastor's. Cousin Mary, Gertrude, and I spent the day assisting Grace. When nightfall came, and we went home to dress, I felt as if it would be better for me to remain, than to pass another sleepless night recalling the events of the evening; but my absence would have been remarked, and I could not resist the desire to look once more into the eyes which had heeded me so little on the wedding night. So I went! We found Grace receiving her guests at the side of her husband; how good and how happy they looked. I half envied my lovely cousin! she realized with smiling faith that her destiny was secure; she had a noble heart to turn to amid every storm. Beloved and admired by all who approached her, her soul ran over with gladness. I secured a quiet corner. How eagerly I listened to every voice that entered the hall. I scarcely dared look up when the familiar one fell on my ear: I wondered if it would ever say again "Kitty" in the tone so dear to me. Mr. Cardover

accidentally sat quite near to me, and he included me in the general bow with which he saluted the ladies next me: he entered into conversation with his next neighbor quietly and agreeably as he ever did, but when the lamp shone on his face, I saw that it was paler than usual. I yearned for one kind, forgiving glance, but it did not come. Walter sat beside me, and talked so gently and kindly: his observing eye comprehended that I was not happy, and that I desired to shrink from notice. Once I saw Mr. Cardover's glance riveted upon Walter with an earnest and searching expression that revealed to me a new thought; he was wondering if Walter loved me. The slow hours glided away, laden with disappointment.

"Will Mr. Cardover walk home with you?" inquired Walter, who saw that something was amiss.

"No!" I simply said.

When we left the house, my arm lay in Walter's, and Mr. Cardover stood where he observed it.

The next evening the same weary performance was to be enacted at Miss Cardover's. I went with the resolution of appearing very gay and happy, but found I had miserably succeeded in my design, for Miss Cardover caught my hand, and took me with her to the dressing-room; she seated herself in front of me deliberately.

"Now, Kate," she said, "what's the matter between you and Pliny? You look as despairing as two death's heads. Pliny is wretched. Have you been quarrelling?"

"No!" I answered, my heart thrilling with the wild hope that Pliny loved me more deeply than he had supposed.

"What is the matter then?" persisted Miss Cardover.

"Your brother was kind enough to think I might answer for a wife!"

"Did he offer himself to you?" asked Miss Cardover, her dark eyes beginning to flash.

"I believe he did!"

"Did you refuse him?" she questioned, as the flush deepened and brightened.

"I believe I did!" I responded, all pain and anxiety leaving me as hope arose.

"That is sufficient!" said Miss Cardover, rising with an abrupt and proud gesture. "If you cannot appreciate *him*, Kate, I am very sorry for you!" She hastily quitted the room, and left me standing there. I closed the door, and sat down in an arm-chair so infinitely proud and humble in my joy: grateful tears welled from my heart: I had this night learned from his sister's manner and words that Mr. Cardover's happiness had suffered. Now I believed that he had avoided me because even his strong pride could not assume a careless lightness. I remained alone as long as I dared, and then went down stairs. Walter came to me, and conducted me to a seat by an open window that led out on the piazza.

"To-morrow, Kate," he said, "I shall be on the ocean. When I am gone, will you remember that you have promised to be a sister to Effie?"

"Yes, I will!" I replied, looking in his kind, grave eyes. I always loved him best when he threw aside his jesting manner.

"You have kept our meeting at the South a secret?" he asked, inquiringly.

"Yes, certainly, Walter!" I replied.

At this very instant Mr. Cardover stepped in from the piazza. He looked directly at us, as if to let us know that he had overheard our conversation. His look was almost reproachful. I could not forbear gazing in his beloved eyes —he turned away, but not before an expression of boundless tenderness had met me. He did not ask me to dance, bridesmaid though I was, neither did he lead me to supper;

and when accidentally I met him in the course of the evening, he turned away with a hastily averted head, and sought a distant place. I did not mind this now: I thought and cared not how a reconciliation was to occur: I knew it would come, and I left the manner of it to God, trusting in Him, even as the little birds do. It gave me joy that Mr. Cardover avoided me, now that I saw pride was not the most powerful incentive to it: it was a strong and noble principle: he believed Walter claimed me.

Gertrude and I went home with Grace and Mr. Waldron. James Bedell accompanied Gertrude; the next morning he was to leave for the South. As soon as I could, I stole to the pretty chamber designed for me: I left Gertrude and James in the parlor; it did not make me feel lonely now to see James's eyes turn fondly to little Gerty: child though she seemed, she was unusually mature in character.

The gray dawn broke ere I had closed my eyes in slumber. I lay in a bright, happy trance, and some spiritual affinity assured me that he of whom I dreamed, was less miserable than before. The street door closed softly, and Gertrude entered the chamber: I kept my eyes shut, as she bent over and looked at me; but at last I broke into laughter.

"Oh, Kate, don't tell mother I sat up so late!" she said, beseechingly, "but you know it was half past two when we left the party."

Her lovely, girlish face was brilliant with feeling.

"Methinks that is a diamond ring?" I said, seizing the white finger upon which it glistened.

"Methinks it is!" she responded, clasping both hands over her blushing face.

"And methinks James gave it to thee?"

"Methinks he did!" she answered, from behind her screen.

"And methinks thou art engaged to him?"

"Methinks I am!"

"Oh, Gerty, what a child! And you're very happy?"

"Yes."

"Well, take my sage advice, and put off getting married until you are twenty, or at least as long as James will wait. For it is an unnatural thing not to have any girlhood: it is always regretted, even by the happiest wives who have been too early married. Now come to bed, and let us see if we can't catch a little sleep before breakfast time."

It was half past eight when we presented ourselves in the breakfast-room. Gertrude hurried to school: Mr. Waldron took up his hat to go, and I hastened up stairs, considering what an event a daily "good-bye" is between a newly wedded pair. I made the bed, brushed up the room, threw open the windows, and beguiled the time in putting an extra flourish on my hair, after which I sat down, and had a little reverie. Then I went down, and entered Grace's little boudoir, sure that her husband had gone.

"Once more, little pearl!" said Mr. Waldron, as I entered, with his hand under Grace's chin. The young wife laughed, and kissed him once more. They turned and saw me; I had not known whether to advance or retreat.

"Oh, dear!" I exclaimed, "how embarrassing this is! I am sure I stayed up stairs a great while!"

"Well, Kitty, we can't help it!" said Mr. Waldron, laughing. "Good-bye! Good-bye!" He seized his hat, and made his exit forthwith. Then Grace and I sat down in the lovely little boudoir to have a quiet day to ourselves. It looked so cheery, so delicious: we each had a very cunning little rocking-chair, in which we seated ourselves to embroider muslins. In common, with all brides, Grace had finished up all her plain sewing, so that she was put to her wits-end for a change of work. The little alabaster clock

ticked, as I told all my heart to Grace, and blushed to say how great my suffering had been, when under the impression that she returned Mr. Cardover's partiality.

"Oh, Kitty! Kitty Hamilton!" she exclaimed. "What an idea; Pliny never cared at all for me!"

"Why, Grace, what makes you think so?"

"Because I know it. I saw that he had a preference for you; I used to wonder at your indifference!"

"But, Grace, don't you remember at Blooming Hill how he spoke so low to you at the window, and how he bent over your chair, while you blushed, and looked exactly as if he was talking love to you?" I blushed to the tips of my ears at this agonizing reminiscence,—such it had always been. Grace thought a moment, and then clapped her hands at recollecting the circumstance.

"He was teasing me about Horace, you little, miserable darling! And did all your coldness to him at that time spring from that?"

"Yes."

"I think he began to fancy you about the time of that visit for a wife. He always seemed to take you under his charge in a measure."

"I think he might have liked me instead of Judith Morton."

"Oh, don't be too monopolizing, Kitty! He fancied a heavenly soul was enframed in Judith's beautiful form. He loved her as I loved Mr. Benzoni, only not to that extent. He realizes that she was only a shadow of beauty."

"But, Grace, I certainly overheard Miss Cardover say, the other day, that her brother would marry me to-morrow, if he could get up the same kind of feeling for me he had for you."

"Well, she meant her brother Seth, of course!" said

Grace, laughing, and looking at me as if she wondered how I had managed to mystify myself to such a degree.

"Oh, I never thought of him!" I answered. "I had always fancied that he was an admirer of our Effie."

"You did? It has been perfectly clear to me that he has been halting beween you and Effie for six weeks—looking first at one, then at the other. I suppose he thinks you are the smartest, and Effie is the prettiest."

"Grace, is it possible that I have endured so much suffering during a year or two for nothing?" I questioned. "All my misery has hinged upon a simple mistake."

"It is even so, dear Kate. Your case is not peculiar; we always grieve about that which proves a blessing in the end. I suffered on account of a mistaken idea that Mr. Benzoni could make me happy—Pliny suffered through his illusive idea of Judith. Walter also. The sweet sorrow has done its work for us, so it matters not what occasioned it."

"But then, Grace," I said, "it seems rather provoking to have dwelt in the caverns of despair, when we might just as well have been sporting in the sunshine."

"Not just as well," responded Grace, smiling. "The caverns of despair did for us what the sunshine could not have done."

"Yes, I believe!" I returned.

"When are you going to set Pliny's mind at ease?" asked Grace.

"Why, I think he will seek me again, when he sees that I treat him differently from what I did."

"Sit down to that table and write to him all about it," said the young wife, with an air of wisdom and authority.

"No, I can't!"

"Why not?" she asked.

"I don't exactly like to. I would rather he should seek me again himself."

"You are proud still, Kate! But your lofty head will come down when you ask Pliny's pardon for all your follies —they must look to him very much like coquetries. Perhaps you may not see him again alone for a long time: he will probably be at *Father* Waldron's next Wednesday evening."

"A groomsman cannot be absent from bridal parties very well."

The next Wednesday a festal throng gathered in the stone house at Blooming Hill: many intimate friends and relatives went from Boston to spend the day. In the evening a more formal company was expected. As the twilight shadows came down, I suddenly thought I would go to the flower garden, and tiny green-house, and weave two wreaths, one for Grace and one for myself. I desired to look as well as I could; the sweetest blossoms of hope lay in their freshness on my soul, and it seemed no mockery to twine tender flowers about my head. So I sought the flowers I needed, and went to the summer-house to form them into a wreath: I had not long been at work, when Grace espied me from the piazza. She did not come to me, but ere long Pliny Cardover did. He wore the same grave face that I had seen for weeks, as he bowed and said,

"Grace asked me to come for you, Miss Kate."

"Oh, thank you!" I had just completed my wreath, and I laid it around my head. "See! is this completely irresistible?" I asked, looking in his eyes with a smile: the sadness on his countenance instantly fled, and he looked down on me with a smile so radiant in its deep tenderness, that my gaze dropped to the ground: rich floods of happiness swept into my soul, wave rose trembling upon wave, until my heart was full: I could comprehend no more. I believed

that to him I was beautiful and bright, although to the many, I might be one to be passed by with careless look.

"It is chilly. Shall we go in?" asked Mr. Cardover, with a return to his former cold manner. He was so distant, that the frankness on my tongue was stayed—I desired again to hear pleading words on that stern lip.

"Please wait one second until I get Grace's wreath," I said. "Isn't that lovely?" and I held it up. "Now let us go." I gathered up my white dress and ran on before him to the house.

Grace stood in the hall: I placed the wreath upon her gracefully shaped head.

"Thank you, Kitty!" said Mr. Waldron, gazing upon his wife, as if her loveliness drew his heart away; then he turned from her, as if by an effort of will, and strove to direct his attention to his parents' guests. It was very hard to enter into commonplace conversation with the friends around me, and yet I went from one to another and spoke some cordial words—each one little knew how my whole being overflowed with love and blessing, and how I wished I could draw down such a bright shower from Paradise to refresh the world-weary souls gathered in those ancient rooms. Wherever I moved I was conscious that dark eyes followed me, and that a manly heart was pondering whether it had again been duped by woman. It seemed to me that I distinctly comprehended the moments, when that heart yielded to supreme confidence in me, and when doubt and wonder swayed it. I did not look towards him, but his sudden smile and expression of countenance in the summer-house had given me the key to his nature and his love.

I stood a moment alone. Mr. Cardover came to my side. "Kate, let me speak with you!" he said, offering his arm. He took me to the piazza, which was entirely secluded; the lights from the drawing-room shed a dancing brilliance

upon the vines that closed in the piazza. We paced up and down several times before Mr. Cardover spoke. At length he asked abruptly,

"Are you engaged to Walter?"

"No!" I answered, and my heart began to beat very fast.

"He went to see you when you were at the South?" he continued, and then I felt his eyes upon me searchingly, and I knew that the doubt was in his heart. My heart trembled and rose up in my throat, so that I could not instantly reply.

"He visited you at the South, did he not?" he repeated, with an accent of sternness, and his look was still upon me.

"He came where I was by accident," I said.

"Did he know you were there when he came?"

"No! but he wished our meeting kept secret; this was for no reason dishonorable to Walter."

"You may not know his reason for keeping it secret."

"Yes, I know it, and I approve of it," I said.

"I have no right to ask you whether you have a preference for Walter," Mr. Cardover said.

"I have not!" I answered.

"Did you tell me truth the other night, Kate, before you left me?" his low voice trembled. "Was it only to see how much my love would bear, that you have"—he stopped, but his tremulous cadence thrilled through me. "Are you only wilful, Kate?"

I did not answer or look up, for the beating of my heart was too great for speech.

"Don't you care for me a little, dearest?" he took my hand. and perused my face, oh, how lovingly, I knew, although I did not see the look.

A gay and laughing group came out on the piazza, and

began to promenade. Mr. Cardover released my hand, but we followed the promenaders up and down silently.

"Will you ride home with Elizabeth and me?" questioned Mr. Cardover, after a long pause.

"I agreed to stay all night here," I answered.

"When shall you be home?"

"To-morrow."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The next morning we reached home before dinner. Effie went with Miss Cardover the night before: when she met us at the door, I saw that she was agitated. She followed me to my room, which she had shared since Grace's marriage.

"What is it, Effie?" I asked, sitting down.

"Mr. Seth Cardover has made me an offer of marriage," she answered, lowering her eyes.

"Well!" I said, laying aside my bonnet and shawl, and thinking, as I looked at her, how angelically beautiful she was. What a contrast to Mr. Seth's homely appearance.

"What shall I do?" she asked, looking at me in a perfectly childlike manner.

"What do you want to do, Effie?"

"I think," she said, sighing, and she looked like a condemned prisoner, "that Walter would like to have me married to some respectable man. Often when he has looked at me, I have felt that I was a care to him."

She covered her face with her hands, and wept quietly.

"Could you love Mr. Cardover?"

"Perhaps I could, if I should try very hard. I don't know."

"Would you be willing to marry him, loving him so little, Effie?"

"I would, to make Walter at ease about me. I don't think, dear Kate, that Walter has any fear for me, only a kind of anxiety as to what will become of me. I can never marry any but some matter-of-fact widower, because I never could tell my story to any—to one whom I could love and look up to with all my soul. I think it would not be a great sin to marry Mr. Cardover, feeling as I do—because,—because I think he does not love me so very deeply." She dropped down on her knees beside me, and laid her head on my lap with such passionate, heart-breaking weeping.

"Oh, Katy! kiss me—hold your arms around me tightly. I am so unhappy!"

"Why, Effie?" I laid my cheek on hers, and held her trembling hands.

"I can never love again! I am sacrificed! so young!" She looked up prayingly through the brimming tears.

"But you need not marry him, dear."

"If I do not marry, and my history should become known, every body would shun me,—but if I were his wife it would be different. And, Katy, I might have a precious child to love. Oh! I would give it my soul,—my life! My baby was four weeks old when it died—and I loved it—loved it—loved it! I would have died for it,—would have been buried in unknown places all my life with it. God took it from me. I thought he meant to kill me with ten thousand deaths when that last agony came, and I was left perishing alone in this great world. I die to think of it! Oh! kiss me again, Katy!"

I clasped her close to my heart with speechless sobs.

"And I loved *him*," she whispered, shuddering. "It was a dream, Katy—I was so weak, and he drew me away from God, from every thing—and I never dreamed where he

was drawing me to,—and he could have taken me down to hell with him, if ——"

"If what, Effie?"

"If I had not overheard Mrs. Henry praying to him, in a voice of anguish, to speak one kind word to her. He left her with rude and cruel speech—and her sobs smote me so. I knew then that she was good and loving, and that I stood in God's presence a lost, abandoned sinner. I fled that day."

"And since then, darling Effie, you have been trying to be one of God's innocent angels—and He has kept you in his arms, and you will wander hand in hand with the pure in heaven."

"Oh, yes! Katy, will I?" Her blue eyes looked up.

"Yes, precious sister. And have you been so unhappy all the time you have been here?"

"Oh, no! but when Mr. Cardover asked me in a letter to be his wife, the great gulf of the past opened, as if to swallow me up in its darkness. And oh! to have a heart, Katy, and not to be able to love with it."

"Effie, sweetest, don't marry him—don't give away the freedom of your heart: don't make this pitiable effort to twine your affections about him." I could not bear to see her beauteous youthfulness calmly laid upon a cold altar. She lay with her head upon my knee, giving way to thought.

"Is he good, Katy?"

"Yes."

"Kind?"

"Yes."

"He is a man of sense, Katy, although his looks are against him?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Do you think in time he would learn to love me very much?"

"Yes, dear, I know he would."

"And do you think I could make him happy, oh! if I tried with my whole heart, and prayed every morning and night to do so?"

"Yes, you might, Effie."

"I would make it my life's work; oh! it almost seems now as if some heavenly kindness came into my heart for him. Would it be a wasted life and heart, thus to devote myself to making his existence brighter?"

"Why, no; I suppose not," I said, catching the hope that looked from her eyes.

"And, although I know I ought not to think I can have much influence, still I would try so hard to strengthen his hands in every good work—and to make his soul purer, as it nears heaven. And would he not stay my fainting strength upon God too?"

"Yes, he is sincerely religious and high principled. He is really one of those who will be far handsomer in the Spirit land than here. I suppose we think far too much upon looks and manner."

"Oh! tell me, shall I have him, Katy?"

I buried my face in my hands in profoundest thought. There seemed something lofty, something heroic in this devotion of a young and exquisitely beautiful woman to the embellishment of a plain, homely life. I never could for a moment think of Effie as one who had sinned so deeply. She always stood before me as innocent, deeply loving, cruelly wronged—one whose God had stooped down to redeem her from the wolf-dog's lacerating teeth. And yet I dared not advise her.

"I cannot say, Effie. Do as your heart impels you."

"Then, Katy, my lot is fixed. I will be his wife, if he can take me, after learning all."

"When does he expect an answer?"

"To-day."

"To-day?"

"Yes; I think he is waiting for me now. I heard the street door close a moment ago."

Josephine came in and confirmed the supposition, and then tripped singing away; never dreaming of the heart within her, some day to be awakened.

"Will you take what I shall write down to him, Kate, and bring me back his answer?"

"Yes."

She took up a pencil with a heavy sigh, and wrote a few lines, adding at the end, "If you still think me worthy of being your wife, I will be so; if not, keep my secret for ever."

I took down the note: he looked up eagerly, expecting to see the lovely face of Effie. I handed him the letter, saying, "Read it, if you please, and tell me whether you wish to think about it."

He read it; the crimson blood mounted to his forehead.

"Come back in an hour," he said. I went back. "Have *you* read it?" he asked; his face was a shade paler.

"Yes," I answered.

"You know the whole?"

"Yes."

"What do you think of her?" he asked, watching me closely.

"I love her."

"How old was she at the time?"

"Seventeen."

"She had no mother?"

"No."

"You love her?"

"Yes, very deeply. She is now better worth than millions of hackneyed, fashionable women."

"Will you tell her I repeat my offer, and ask her to come down?"

I hastened to Effie, who sat by the little dressing-table, her head bowed upon her folded arms. Her face was white as death, so terrible was the exposition of her sin.

"Oh, if you could go with me!" she said. "How *can* I meet him?"

"It will soon be over, Effie, and then it will be buried in eternal oblivion."

She trembled violently. I put my arm around her, and went down to the parlor door with her, for she hung back, and I had no faith in stretching out the misery by procrastination. She went in, and I started up stairs, but I heard a fall, and hurried into the parlor. She lay senseless and white upon the floor, while Seth Cardover bent over her with an expression of feeling and pity, which I thanked him for. He lifted up her lovely head, and put back the ringlets with kind, caressing fingers: a shower of tears fell upon her pallid face. I took a pitcher of water from the table, and bathed her temples—then saturated my handkerchief with it, and laid it upon the back of her neck. She opened her eyes, and painfully returned to consciousness. Seth Cardover carried her to the sofa: she looked in his eyes.

"God help me to shield you, poor dove!" he said, tenderly laying her head upon his shoulder. She half hid her face, and wept. I left the room.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

An hour or two passed, and then Effie came back to our chamber. I looked anxiously at her. She did not look happy, but I saw that her heart was eased of its terrible weight: a pitiful resignation was on her meek face. She was that day giving up the vision that cleaves to every human soul: she was resigning the hope of an exquisitely congenial heart—a dim hope this oft may be, living in the inmost recesses of the spirit, perhaps rarely acknowledged by some, yet at a betrothal hour it rises to perception with anguished consciousness, if the pair are not suited to each other. This is more particularly the case with women, who do not select, but are selected, and this feeling is consistent with a measure of attachment. The realization of a mighty loss sweeps vaguely over the soul, at the very moment a fair hand is laid within the strong palm of one who may be dearer than others—yet he may not be the *one* out of all the universe who was created for that trembling betrothed.

"Has Mr. Cardover gone, Effie?"

"No, I am going to ride with him," she answered slowly. She looked like a marble statue, as she leaned against the bed.

"Sit down a moment, dear Effie, you look so pale."

"I will not keep him waiting," she answered in the same

calm way. "I will be literally careful of his wishes. I am a woman without a heart, Kate, or else it is fearfully benumbed. It is terrible, but I do not realize it—I have no feeling." She put on her bonnet; as she looked in the glass more from habit than solicitude about her appearance, she said, "How cold and stony I look!"

"It is a reaction of feeling, Effie; it will pass away. Have you told Mr. Cardover how you feel?"

"No, but I am going to as we ride. I can be honest, if not loving. I feel as if I am committing a great wrong to-day—there is a cold gulf between him and me. Something impels me to marry him, and then something holy and solemn tells me that the deep sea between us can never be crossed."

"Oh, what a strange world this is! I wonder if it is sinful for you to marry him, Effie?"

"I will let him decide," she said, and she left me. I felt for her the most intense and yearning pity, the more so, as every recess of my spirit was yielding an affirmative to a beloved one: the cold surface of restraint which I had imposed upon myself (and which had quelled not only all expression, but all thought of Pliny Cardover) was melting away, and I kneeled in floods of love, trembling under the new baptism—trembling lest this overflowing love should speak forth in every utterance of my being, untempered by the chaste reserve which is a woman's dower.

I expected Pliny, or a letter from him, and as I devoted my attention to my toilette, I listened to hear the knocker. With what a new satisfaction I rolled over the ringlets of my hair, knowing that Pliny cared for them. Perhaps it was vanity, but I did not care; I could joyfully give up the admiring eyes of the world for his glance. I looked with folded hands upon my gallery of dresses: finally I selected a delicate blue gingham, and donned it, with a little em-

broidered collar embellishing it at the throat, and cuffs of the same pattern. Then I put on a little black silk apron, bedizzened with Brussels lace and velvet trimming: a cambric handkerchief peeped from one of the lace pockets, and some sweet clover blossoms from the other. I had just given a last, satisfied glance at myself, when the knocker sounded. I hurried down stairs. At the door stood a boy with a letter, inquiring if Miss Kate Hamilton was at home. I took the letter, recognized the writing, and started up stairs.

"Oh, miss," cried the boy, "Mr. Cardover said I was to wait and see if you would send an answer."

"Sit down—I will," I replied. I reached my room, and read.

"Dear Kate,—I have just returned from Blooming Hill, but I cannot rest without writing to you. Your low replies are trembling through my inmost heart. You look into my eyes until you bear my soul away, or droop your gaze as if you would not let me see your heart. How many times have I read in that sudden drooping 'all your love is returned.' Could you trifle with me, Kate? How *could* you turn from such wealth of idolatry? from a human soul, priceless in the eye of God, yet yielded to your slight hand, without power to free itself? I have sometimes thought dear, when you have turned from me with a kind of trembling resolution, that you dared not trust your spirit to my handling. Ah! how little do you understand how love softens man's strong nature. If—and it is hard for me to believe it, Katy, dear—but if you have played with my heart-strings, only to learn how many tones they may give out, then, even then, you shall hear no reproaches from me—the past shall be blest—blest because we met in it. I have occasionally thought, from slight expressions, that you would

fling aside every restraint upon your liberty—that you even looked with a sort of rebellion upon marriage. Was it so, Katy? At such times, too, you strove to avoid me with a passionate coldness, sometimes with starting tears. I would not blame you for this, Katy—I would not blame you for any thing. I would only hold you close against my breast when storms come—would only soothe and comfort you, when your heart grew faint, and your feet trembled along the difficult earth-paths. But, oh! how much less must your love be than mine, if aught can balance against it. No wisdom or foresight can evade the clouds that ofttimes beset our life. Cares there are—sufferings there are! No situation is free from them—but happiness is rare. Who would not choose it, even if certain that shadows might follow the sunshine, rather than lead a tame life, when it would still be subject to the visits of the tormentor—the regenerator—pain? But these thoughts that I have chronicled here, have never been more than transient with me. I have thought that I have read deeper into Katy's heart—have felt that she could look up to God with faith, and see a divine benevolence, while weeping beneath the Smiter's hand. I have thought there must be some strong reason, to me unknown, for your rejection of my love. I am not able to believe there was perfect truth in those cruel, sadly spoken words, 'Not well enough to marry you.' Be frank with me, I entreat! If there is any right cause why our lives should be divided on earth, do you fear me, Katy? Do you know me so little as to suppose I would not be the first to strengthen you in all that is just and true? My love comprehends your soul's deepest well-being. I could *bear* that our earthly lives should run apart, Kate, eternally beloved—*wife*. I should obey truth and duty, rather than an impulse for happiness—life is an heroic drama. I would not that you, more than myself, should fail in heavenly duty. I would not

that you should love me *beyond* Godlike right—but next to it—clasped with all that is holiest, mightiest, deepest in human souls. But I feel, beloved, that there exists no obstacle great enough to separate us. Alas! if the yielding love in your face so brief a time since, is but to be followed by another wayward flight. I will not believe it. What is this mystery in your demeanor, Katè? Have you not sometimes as really cast yourself into my heart, as if my arm had enfolded you? Do you remember that gay evening at your house, when I led you out to dance? It was then that hope arose within me; and when I came to you the next day and gave you white roses, I thought a blessed affirmation, reached me from you. The cloud passed from my horizon, and—

> 'Life was like a sunset's glories blended
> With all the waking splendors of the morn.'

"But you went from me—falteringly. It passed through my thoughts that you were engaged to Walter. When I overheard his words to you soon after, I thought I had the key to your varying conduct. I thought I read your love for me, in the beseeching gaze that prayed against coldness or sternness. I thought that it was your destiny to become Walter's wife, and that it was mine to dwell far from you through an eternity of time. But here I was mistaken, and mystery pursues me still. Do you remember when we went to Blooming Hill, more than a year ago? I had learned to love you before that time—there you turned from me—away—away! Then I became aware that my every hope was allied to you, and I suffered, while my pride assumed a careless demeanor. Then I did not think that same pride could kneel to you as it has since done: *then* I had not learned my full capacity of loving. When you went South we parted without one kind farewell—one loving glance.

Even then, I doubted sometimes if you cared so little for my heart throbs. Often, when in fancy I saw you in your Southern home, have I felt that your eyes turned tearfully to me—so thrilling, so living was the feeling, that I have scores of times written long letters to you, to be destroyed in different moments. Beloved Kate! shall I not now take your hand in mine? Do you fear that I shall be severe?—that I shall not be tender enough at all times? that I shall guide you over hard places in my allegiance to duty? Teach me then to cling to truth with woman's more vine-like hold! Clasp about my nature the gracious flowers of tenderness! I know that I have a stern, unyielding spirit. I scarcely dare believe that the future contains a joy so divine as the union of our destinies. I scarcely dare hope that I shall see you within a blessed home of mine, that I shall come to you from the toils of the day, and dream that God's heaven has come down to refresh this outer world. And yet I do hope for all this. Do you not believe in a presentiment of another's spiritual presence? Do you not think that one person may so intensely think of another who is beloved, as to draw the other's thoughts towards him? Have I not seen you conscious of this? unable almost to break from me when you would—almost powerless in the detaining grasp of my affection? Has not my soul affected you when it has turned to you with the strength of hope or suffering? Act as you will, speak what you will, I have learned your secret at last: you are mine own, my wife—for you love me. Tell me all your heart; tell me why you have turned away from me. I will have a tender care over your soul—I will watch its increasing beauty, and when the material case that encloses it shall have fallen to dust, I will meet you in God's time in that upper world, where I shall behold you in all your fresh angelic loveliness. Beloved Katy! come to me—lay your hands in mine!

'Again I feel the wish intense and burning,
To live within thy life, to drink thine air;
That deep, mysterious, and mighty yearning
Would draw me down from heaven, wert thou not there.'

"Write to me one line! Decide our fate *now!* I can bear no farther suspense. Tell me that you love me!

"PLINY."

I gazed upon the letter like one entranced. I kissed it, and held it to my heart. More than all I loved him because he said, "I could *bear* that our earthly lives should run apart." I loved him because he was strong enough to choose the strictest path of right, rather than the flowery one of happiness, if the two paths could not merge in one. I saw in this a strength that would yield to no temptation, that would hold me up in heavenly rectitude, when my cowardly heart would pray to take an easier road.

I suddenly recollected the boy who was waiting in the hall, and seizing a pencil, I wrote—

"DEAR PLINY,—Come to me!

"KATE."

I hastened down stairs with my note, and then sought my room to read again the beloved letter. When I had read it many times, I slowly folded it, wondering if it was I, whose life had been changed to this golden existence. I looked in the glass; there I was, but transfigured under the delicious breath of love, hope, joy!

I went to the parlor. I had not been seated five minutes before Mr. Cardover passed beneath the window. He came in, and when I looked at him his face shone with a whole heaven of love. He stretched out his arms to me, and then

I lay sobbing on his breast, while his dear face bent above me, and his voice murmured tenderest words.

"You give yourself to me now, Katy?" he tremulously asked.

"Yes."

"For this life?"

"Yes," I repeated.

"For eternity, also, beloved?"

"Yes."

"Do you love me with your whole heart, Katy?"

"Yes."

He gently lifted up my head, and sealed upon my lips a first trembling kiss. "Do you realize that our betrothal is being solemnized in presence of the Infinite?" he asked with reverent, thrilling accent.

"Oh, yes!" I said, as a holy illumination beamed around my soul, and seemed to turn it heavenward.

"Now sit down with me, Katy, and tell me of the past."

We sat down on the sofa, but for a long, long time we were speechless. My head lay against his shoulder, and his gaze dwelt upon me. At length I told him how faithless and how foolish I had been; and I did not fear to tell him all my soul.

"Are you going South again to teach, Katy?" he asked, bending over with a smile.

"Shall I?" I responded, meeting his look with an answering smile.

"No!"

"Then I will not," I said.

A carriage drove up to the door. "It is Effie and your brother," I exclaimed, going to the window. When I saw Mr. Seth Cardover hand out tenderly the pale Effie, the intense pity again swept into my soul. Mr. Seth drove away,

and the light, slow tread of Effie was heard mounting the stairs.

"Is it possible, Kate," asked Pliny, "that a beautiful and attractive girl like Effie can love my brother, who is twice her age, and—he does not seem fitted to please her."

"I presume it is settled by this time whether they are to marry each other or not," I answered evasively.

An hour after I sat by Effie's side; poor, weak, drooping Effie! She was not strong and independent enough to bear her fate alone, or I should have implored her to have done so.

"Oh, strengthen me!" she sighed, laying her head on my breast, while slow tears ran over her face all unheeded.

"How has it turned out, dearest?" I asked, stroking her golden hair. Her little hand lay over her heart, and held it back, as it were, with an ever-increasing pressure.

"He wishes me to marry him," she answered.

"Did you conceal any of your feelings from him?"

"No. I told him how dead and worthless my heart was. He said he honored and trusted me because I was so candid with him."

"Did you ask him if he thought it was wrong for you to enter into so sacred a covenant with such feelings, Effie?"

"Yes, I did. He said he should once have thought so, but now he did not, for he had lived long enough to discover that the majority of marriages arising from hasty love, terminated less happily than those which were founded upon a true knowledge of character. He said he did not expect a life free from shadows, but he thought I could make his quiet existence more bright and peaceful, and he would devote his whole being towards making me content with my decision of this day. He will not urge our marriage until I have learned to know him better. I am so grateful for this."

All the while that Effie talked, there was pressed upon my spirit a feeling that it was not right to marry without love. I scarcely dared to say it, lest she would be tempest tossed with indecision, and then finally would settle into the same fate. Poor Effie too often allowed others to think for her. Perhaps she might never find a more honest and faithful guide than Seth Cardover. As if answering to my thought, she said,

"He says that in this practical world, the theories of our youth cannot always be carried out—there are millions who never meet those whom they could love best; therefore it was not reprehensible to choose some one who might in a less degree embellish the lonely path of existence. He thought we could try to grow better together. When he said that, Kate, I felt as if a watchful Providence had appointed him to lead me through my earth-life. We do not live a great while here"—she brushed away her tears with something like hope. "It would not do for me to be too happy; I never should be 'faithful unto the end,' if I were so *very* happy."

"I am going to be your sister, dear Effie!" I said, and as I spoke I strove to conceal the proud joy that illuminated my heart.

"Oh, what a comfort it will be!" she answered, raising her head, and looking at me observantly. A passionately yearning, hungering expression swept over her countenance as she said, "You *love*, dear Kate."

My soul silently responded, "How I pity—pity—pity you, poor child!"

* * * * *

One year from that time Effie and I stood at the marriage altar together. Her face was calm, tranquil, even hopeful. Ere we had left our room she had said to me, "I could not have believed that my feelings could have changed

so greatly in one year. Seth is so good, so generous. I am sure that he loves me a great deal now—and I know that I shall learn to love him for the heart, strong and true, that beats in his uncomely form. Already, Kate, he seems to acquire a kind of beauty from this heart."

When Pliny knelt beside me after the marriage vows were said, it seemed as if we knelt in a new and glorified light.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Five years had passed away, during which I had been a wife. And once, for one brief month, I had been a mother. But now our little Lilian, "airy, fairy Lilian," played in

"Bright fields beyond the swelling flood."

Wiser hearts than mine heeded the unfolding of her infant nature, and holier hands guided her feet in paths of beauty and love. A passing sorrow it had been, that she had preceded us to the heaven-world, for often had we joyously dwelt on the hope that she would bloom on earth an angel, shedding around her the healing perfume of a noble life. But we had long since learned to feel that it was best and brightest to yield her to God. A shining chain seemed thrown from earth to skies, now that she was there to welcome us, when we should cross the stream.

It was a day of June. Exultant nature poured out her lavish treasures, sunshine, and bird-music, and tender foliage waving in the glittering air. Our cottage was half buried amid fragrant vines, that clambered the slender piazza pillars, and were festooned about the low roof; the roses thrust themselves into our chamber window, and the honeysuckles filled the parlor and hall with delicious perfumes. It was afternoon, and Pliny had not returned from his business in

the city; but house, garden and lawn were traversed by gay feet. I stood in the porch, and looked out upon the scene. In the grape arbor glittered a long table, laden with white dishes. About it flitted the white-robed forms of Josephine and Lily: they were placing vases of flowers upon the table, and bidding Betty, my domestic, wait with her heaping dishes of strawberries until they were quite ready for them. Walter Gray and Frank Morton stood by, begging for something to do. Their merry jests and laughter came to my ear, and my heart thrilled in joyous unison. Cousin Mary and Mr. Rodman walked quietly about, arm in arm. I could hardly help laughing to see Cousin Mary dressed in white, as we all were, and ornamented with roses. Josephine had insisted upon it, even Miss Cardover's black hair bore a white rose. Grace and Effie sat at the foot of an old elm tree, looking beautiful and innocent. The girls had crowned them with blush roses, and had placed a bouquet of the same in the bosoms of their dresses, because, as they laughingly said, they had entered the kingdom of wedded love. They had also adorned me in the same manner, but upon their girlish brows only white buds lay. And yet within their eloquent eyes dwelt the dream of love, and two handsome forms followed their footsteps, and two noble, brilliant faces lighted up with joy anear them. At Effie's knee stood a fairy creature of two years, shy as a fawn, and as graceful and gleesome. The young mother was twining a wreath to cross the shoulders, and clasp beneath. the tender arms of "little Sylph," as she loved to call her child. Grace's Harry, a golden-haired, angelic child, ran towards her from the house. He had been sleeping, and his flushed cheeks were rosy as the flowers; his eyes were brilliant and tender as the summer sky. He was one of those rare children, towards whom the heart bounds with overflowing love. Many a time he came to spend a day with me, and when

the sun began to decline, we would turn our feet towards the ivy-covered stone mansion, where his happy parents dwelt during the season of flowers.

Suddenly I saw Mr. Waldron, Seth and Pliny at the gate. I bounded down the steps, and ran to meet them. As I passed the arbor I heard Frank say to Josephine, "Josey, when we have been married as long as Mrs. Pliny Cardover has, don't you think we shall manage to look less enraptured at the sight of each other?"

I looked laughing back to hear Josephine's reply. It was womanly of course. "Why, Frank, it is her guests she is so glad to see."

And right glad I was to see the guests too, good and noble ones, who would make earth a heaven, if they could. As we walked back, Grace and Effie met us, with their enchanting children. I read in their lovely faces the same joy that ever came to my heart, when Pliny's beloved face broke upon my vision. I knew that Effie did not comprehend the fathomless depth of a love like mine, or Grace's; but she loved Seth very much, and was very happy, and Grace and I never spoke to her of the glorious splendors and tender sweetnesses that blessed our heart-world. We married people took a little stroll down by the river side, promising to return when a bell should call us to tea. It sounded at last, and we went to the arbor, where the girls and their lovers met us. Lily was so matchlessly lovely, her large eyes melting, flashing with the love at her heart.

"Oh, Pliny! how beautiful she is!" I whispered, unable to take my fascinated gaze from her.

"Yes, beautiful indeed. A noble pair they are; but, Kitty, they have yet to learn, as we have done, how infinite and drainless the ocean of love is. Do you suppose Grace and Horace would exchange feelings with them?"

"Oh, not for worlds! it would be like going back to the

innocence of infancy, after having drained the deepest joys of maturity."

"The days of our betrothment were like theirs, we would not return to them," Pliny said and looked down, a tender chaste smile hovering on his lip. I only looked in his eyes with a smile for reply.

We seated ourselves at table, "a merrie companie." Cousin Mary whispered, "How I wish Gertrude and James were here."

"Yes, indeed," I returned; "but Gerty writes that she is such a happy wife. She has become acquainted with Mrs. Henry's family, and loves dear Jessie as if she were a sister."

"Oh, Katy!" said Pliny, "that reminds me that I have a letter from the South for you, from Miss Baldwin I think."

"Oh, give it to me! They have only written once since Mr. Henry's death."

"Go on pouring out the tea; you can't have the letter now, little wife."

I accordingly went on pouring out the tea, and listening to the gay chat around the table: it finally merged into earnest conversation upon the well-being of the race. It was sweet to sit and listen, the while my heart gave light, exulting bounds, to feel that each soul present had, during the past five years grown richer and stronger, holding with deepening faith a trust in the everlasting beauty.

When our physical wants were supplied, we found that Walter and Frank had prepared some merry toasts to surprise us with. As soon as we rose from table, I stole to the deserted elm-tree to read my letter. It ran thus, and was from Miss Baldwin.

"DEAR KATE—How gloriously the summer sunshine floods the earth as I write. I am sitting in the school room, whence I look out of the window occasionally to see Minnie and the

children in the garden. What do you suppose they are about? Why, Minnie is teaching them botany. Don't open your eyes, for I presume you are wondering how she has been able to recollect her studies. Well! I proposed to her to rub up her last knowledge on this subject, that she might teach the children. You know she is passionately fond of flowers. Ah! Kate, you don't know what nice times we have now that Philip Henry has departed this mortal life. Don't scold, for I am not a saint yet, and fear I never shall be. I've tried conscientiously to feel a little sorry for him, but right on top of the effort, comes the thought that he ought to be chained, if he won't do any thing but make others unhappy. But understand me, Kate: before he died, I was able to feel an ardent desire that he might secure eternal peace, and I outgrew the habit of treating him with contempt. Yet, when I see that Minnie's nature seems to bloom into fresh youth, I cannot but be glad that the incubus is removed from her heart. She and Jessie are like sisters, rather than mother and daughter. Jessie is the guiding spirit of Minnie, without knowing it, and my darling drinks in health from her young, strong soul. Jessie is governess to the children now: the dear child proposed being so herself.

"Egbert and Harriet made us a short visit not long ago. They are about as happy as might have been expected. She is a nonsensical little thing, as she always was. She wrangles with Egg one minute, and coaxes him into any thing she pleases the next. The saints preserve us! when I look about upon my married friends, I still rejoice that no man has the right to rule over me. I really begin to hope Fred won't be the rascal his father was; the child seems to have quite a conscience. Ah! Kate, your eyes would run over with tears, if you could hear, as I sometimes do, his mother praying with him, when he has done wrong. There is an entreating pathos in her voice that melts Freddie at once. I cannot but hope

those prayers will prove a shield and talisman to the boy, when he shall have entered into manhood. My innocent Minnie is not one to let her child go to destruction through false modesty. She intends in early youth to warn him of the rocks upon which his father's soul and her own peace were shipwrecked. Kate! mothers have not done all they ought to make their sons true husbands; to stay the tide of agony at the broken hearts of wives.

"And now I have something to tell you that I think will delight you more than all. Jessie has one central thought; one idea which she lives to accomplish; and Minnie and I are equally earnest about it. We intend to educate our slaves for freedom. Minnie and Jessie already have papers made out, so that if death should surprise them, their consciences may be free. But after many consultations and much thought, we have resolved to offer to the slaves the chance of working out their liberty. The next morning after we came to this decision, we called all the servants together, and it was voted that I should address them. I did so! they wept and shouted with delight, but a month afterwards, there were but three men out of the sixty, who had discovered energy enough to work over hours. You know, Kate, they are not severely taxed. This was a sad disappointment to Jessie, but did not surprise me. What reason had we to expect qualities that spring from hopes cradled in childhood, fostered in youth, acted from in manhood? I saw that we had heavy duties to perform, and my heart beat high as I realized the magnitude of the work before us. We had a school established: to this Minnie, Jessie and I have devoted three evenings in the week. We teach them to read and write; a very dull task it is, but after the lessons are over, the dusky group gathers more closely around us, and we read some story suited to their comprehension, and calculated to cherish honest aspirations. The unspeakable delight of our auditors

communicates itself to our own hearts, and some new charm seems to spring from the simple pages which could not attract attention, if read aside from the thrilled souls of such listeners This reading has a magic influence in stirring up the dormant faculties of the negroes: it introduces them into a fresh and higher world; from morning until night, labor is cheered by allusions to the story; thus innocent thoughts become the food of the spirit, and the interior life of the servants is gradually elevated. One slave after another conceives the idea of acting a better part in life: the energy of one is communicated, and the hope of freedom acquires sufficient power to overcome constitutional indolence. Those who earn their freedom, and still prefer remaining with us, we shall hire. To me, it seems that slaves should manifest energy enough to *earn* liberty, else they are hardly fitted to become *men* in a busy world. The principle of bondage we know to be wrong, but this principle is most efficiently assailed by instilling into the negro race strength to rise above its dominion. Mr. and Mrs. Bedell visit us very often; they are as happy as two little birds. Jessie has a sort of worshipping love for Gertrude, and she always goes to her when her path of duty is uncertain. I have never known an instance where Mrs. Bedell's advice has not been of the wisest character; her beautiful daily life exemplifies the principles that lovingly control her: these principles have been inseminated into her being from childhood; thus there is an abiding strength in her goodness which Jessie realizes and needs. It costs our heroic Jessie infinitely more effort to live up to the standard she desires to, than it does Mrs. Bedell; this is not because one is naturally nobler than the other, but human hands and hearts have ever strengthened Gertrude in self-renunciation, and our poor Jessie was not so aided in "auld lang syne." Remember me to your hus-

band, and all the loved friends whom you have made me acquainted with, through your letters. Adieu.

"ADELAIDE BALDWIN."

I read the letter to the group who had been chatting near me: when I read about Gertrude, I glanced at Cousin Mary; the quick, delighted color sprang to her cheek, and tears to her eyes. Cousin John passed his arm around her with a tender, grateful reverence, which was well fitted to reward her for her patient devotion to his better nature. When the letter had been fully descanted upon, a cotillion on the lawn was proposed. Grace and Effie took their children in the house. The set was full without Pliny and myself. We dropped on the low seat under the elm tree, and looked on. The western sunlight fell with ethereal softness upon the group, and tinged the grape arbor with vermilion, while it slanted brilliantly across the lawn, and illuminated as with fire the cottage windows. At one of the windows appeared the angelic face of Harry, who was looking out radiant with smiles, his curly head framed in a halo of light. I looked at him as if he had been a vision.

"What is Kitty thinking of?" asked Pliny.

"I was thinking it was two years ago to-day since Lilian entered Heaven; it seems so beautiful to think that she now must be more transcendently fair than that lovely child at the window. And I was also thinking, Pliny, of the many poor children who are born under adverse circumstances. Is it not our duty to take one or two such into our home?"

"I have often thought we ought, Katy, but I waited for you to make the proposition."

"Then it shall be done forthwith!" I answered joyfully, exulting to have found a definite field of labor. Josephine came and sat beside us, her lovely cheeks glowing with exercise.

"When are you going to step within the kingdom of love,

Josey?" asked Pliny smiling. "When are you going to give Frank a legal right to torment you?"

She blushed deeply, but with all her childish artlessness replied, "In the fall, I believe." then to turn the subject, she said, "You did not see Judith when she was here, Kate?"

"No! how did she look?"

"Very beautiful: I thought she seemed happy too," returned Josephine. "Mrs. Morton often shows me her letters; they betray a sort of content."

"Did you see Mr. Benzoni?"

"Yes, and I observed that he was very kind and attentive to his wife. I should judge they had learned by experience that it was best to study each other's comfort.—They had a beautiful infant with them. Judith's life seemed bound up in it. I thought the child was dearer to her than the husband."

"Doubtless!"

The curtain falls. Dear reader, Good-bye!

THE END.

D. APPLETON & COMPANY'S

PUBLICATIONS.

Should it be impossible to procure any of the Books on this List, they will be forwarded by the Publishers to any address in the United States, POST-PAID, *on receipt of the price affixed.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

Acton; or the Circle of Life. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 25

Aguilar G. The Mother's Recompense. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

——— **Women of Israel.** 2 vols. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 50

——— **Vale of Cedars.** 12mo.....Cloth, 75

——— **Woman's Friendship.** 12mo.....Cloth, 75

——— **The Days of Bruce.** 12mo. 2 vols....Cloth, 1 50

——— **Home Scenes and Heart Studies.** 12mo..Cloth, 75

——— The above in uniform sets, 8 vols.....extra cloth, 6 00
3 vols.....half calf, 13 00

Alsop's Charms of Fancy. A Poem in Four Cantos. 12mo. Cloth, 1 00

Amelia's Poems. 1 vol. 12mo. Cloth, 1 25
Gilt edges, 1 50

Annals (The) of San Francisco. By F. Soulé, J. H. Gilson, and J. Nisbet. Illust. with 150 engravings, and many fine portraits. 1 vol. 8vo.....Cloth, 3 50
or in roan, marble edges, 4 00
or in half calf extra, 4 50

Aguel's Book of Chess. A Complete Guide to the Game. With illustrations by R. W. Weir. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Anderson's Practical Mercantile Letter-Writer. 12mo. 1 00

Arnold, Dr. History of Rome. 1 vol. 8vo.....Cloth, 3 00
Half calf, 4 00

——— **Lectures on Modern History.** Edited by Prof. Reed. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 25

Arthur. The Successful Merchant. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Appletons' Cyclopædia of Biography, Foreign and American. Edited by the Rev. Dr. Hawks. 1 handsome vol. royal 8vo., with over 600 engravings Cloth, 4 00
Or in sheep, 4 50
In half calf or in half mor., 5 00
Full calf, 6 00

——— **Library Manual.** 8vo.....Half bound, 1 25

——— **New Railway & Steam Navigation Guide.** Published Monthly, under the supervision of the Railway Companies. 16mo.....Paper, 25

——— **Travellers' Guide through the United States and Canadas.** Describing all the Important Places, their Historical Associations, &c. The whole accompanied by Routes of Travel, &c. 1 vol. 12mo.....

——— **New General Catalogue.** 8vo. pp. 242. Paper. 25

MISCELLANEOUS—Continued.

Atlas. Appletons' Modern Atlas of the Earth, on 34 Maps. Colored. Royal 8vo. Half bound, 3 50

—— Cornell's New General Atlas. 1 handsome vol. 4to..... 1 00

Attache (The) in Madrid; or Sketches of the Court of Isabella II. 1 vol. 12mo..... 1 00

Baldwin's Flush Times in Mississippi and Alabama. 12mo. Illustrated..... 1 25

———— Party Leaders. 12mo. .....Cloth, 1 00

Barker (Jacob) Incidents in the Life of. 8vo. 2 portraits. Cloth, 1 00

Barth's Travels in Africa. (In press.).....

Bartlett. Personal Narrative of Explorations in Texas, New Mexico, California, &c. &c. Maps and Illustrations. 2 vols. 8vo..... 4 00

Bartlett. The same, in half calf extra 7 00

———— The same, in full calf extra 8 00

———— The same, cheap edition, in 1 vol., bound..... 3 50

Basil. A Story of Modern Life. By W. Wilkie Collins. 12mo. .....Cloth, 75

Benton's Thirty Years' View; or, a History of the Working of the American Government for thirty years, from 1820 to 1850. 2 very large vols., 8vo. pp. 1527, well printed, Cloth, 5 00
Sheep, 6 00
In half calf or half mor., 7 00
In full calf, 8 00

Abridgment of the Debates of Congress, from 1789 to 1856. From Gales and Seaton's Annals of Congress; from their Register of Debates; and from the Official Reported Debates, by John C. Rives. By the Author of "The "Thirty Years' View." Vol. I. (to be in 15) preparing. Price per vol. 3 00

Beyminstre. By the author of "Lena." 1 vol. (in press).....

Bridgman's, The Pilgrims of Boston and their Descendants. 1 large vol., 8vo.....Cloth, 3 00

Butler's Philosophy of the Weather, and a Guide to its Changes. 12mo.....Cloth 1 00

Bruce's Fawn of the Pale Faces. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Brownell's Poems. 12mo. Boards, 75

— ———— Ephemeron; a Poem. 12mo..... Paper, 25

Bryant's Poems. New edition, revised throughout. 2 vols. 12mo. Cloth, 2 00
Extra cloth, gilt edges, 2 50
Morocco, antique or extra 6 00
Half morocco, gilt, 4 00
Half calf, antique or extra, 4 00
Full calf, antique or extra, 5 00
" In 1 vol. 18mo.... Cloth, 63
Gilt edges, 75
Antique morocco, 2 00

Bryant's What I Saw in California. With Map. 12mo . 1 25

Burnett's Notes on the North-Western Territory. 8vo. Cloth, 2 00

Burton's Encyclopædia of Wit and Humour. Illustrated 1 large vol. 8vo. (In press) ..

Calhoun (J. C.) The Works of (now first collected). 6 vols. 8vo. per vol..... 2 00

———— Sold separately:
Vol. 1. ON GOVERNMENT
2. REPORTS & LETTERS.
3, 4. SPEECHES.
5, 6. REPORTS & LETTERS.
Or, sets in 6 vols. half calf 20 00
" " " full calf, 24 00

MISCELLANEOUS—Continued.

Captain Canot; or, Twenty Years of a Slaver's Life. Edited by Brantz Mayer. 1 vol. 12mo. Illustrated.....Cloth, 1 25

Chapman's Instructions to Young Marksmen on the Improved American Rifle. 16mo. Illustrated.....Cloth, 1 25

Chestnut Wood. A Tale. By Lisle Linden. 2 vols. 12mo...Cloth, 1 75

Clark, L. G. Knick-knacks from an Editor's Table. 12mo. Illustrated..... 1 25

Clarke (Mrs. Cowden). The Iron Cousin. A Tale. 1 vol. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 25

Cockburn's (Lord) Memorials of His Time. 1 thick vol. 12mo. Beautifully printed..... ...Cloth, 1 25

Cooley, A. J. The Book of Useful Knowledge. Containing 6,000 Practical Receipts in all branches of Arts, Manufactures, and Trades. 8vo. Illustrated. Bound, 1 25

Colt, Dr. History of Puritanism. 12mo .....Cloth, 1 00

Coleridge's Poems. 1 neat vol. 12mo. .....Cloth, 1 00
Gilt edges, 1 50
Morocco antique, or extra, 3 50

Coming's Preservation of Health and Prevention of Disease. 12mo..... 75

Cornwall, N. E. Music as It Was, and as It Is. 12mo. Cloth, 63

Cousin's Course of Modern Philosophy. Translated by Wight. 2 vols. 8vo.....Cloth, 3 00
Half calf, 5 00
Full calf, 6 00

Cousin's Philosophy of the Beautiful. 16mo.....Cloth, 62

Cousin's Lectures on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. Translated by Wight. 8vo. Cloth, 1 50
Half calf, 2 50
Full calf, 3 00

———The Youth of Madame De Longueville. 1 vol. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Cowper's Homer's Iliad. Revised by Southey, with Notes by Dwight. 1 vol.....Cloth, 1 25
Gilt edges, 1 50
Antique or extra morocco, 4 00

Creasy (Prof.) Rise and Progress of the English Constitution. 1 vol..... 1 00

Croswell. A Memoir of the Rev. W. Croswell, D.D. 1 vol. 8vo.....Cloth, 2 00

Cust (Lady.) The Invalid's Own Book. 12mo.....Cloth, 50

D'Abrantes (Duchess.) Memoirs of Napoleon, his Court and Family. 2 large vols. 8vo. Portraits.....Cloth, 4 00
——— The same, in half calf extra or antique..... 7 00
——— The same, in full calf extra or antique..... 8 00

De Bow's Industrial Resources, Statistics, &c., of the United States. 8vo. 3 vols. bound in 1 vol.....Cloth, 5 00

De Custine's Russia. Trans. from the French. Thick 12mo. Cloth, 1 25

Dew's Digest of Ancient and Modern History. 8vo. Cloth, 2 00

Don Quixote de La Mancha. Translated from the Spanish. Illustrated with engravings. 8vo. Cloth, 2 00
Half calf, 3 00
Full calf, 4 00

MISCELLANEOUS—Continued.

Drury, A. H. Light and Shade; or, the Young Artist. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Dix's Winter in Madeira, and Summer in Spain, &c. 12mo. Illustrated.....Cloth, 1 00

Dumas (Alex.) The Foresters. A Tale. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

——— Philibert; or, the European Wars of the 16th Century. 12mo....Cloth, 1 25

Dumont's Life Sketches from Common Paths. A Series of American Tales. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Dupuy, A. E. The Conspirator. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Dwight's Introduction to the Study of Art. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Ellen Parry; or, Trials of the Heart. 12mo.....Cloth, 63

Ellis, Mrs. Hearts & Homes; or, Social Distinctions. A Story.....Cloth, 1 50

Evelyn's Life of Mrs. Godolphin. Edited by the Bishop of Oxford. 16mo.....Cloth, 50

Ewbank. The World a Workshop. 16mo.....Cloth, 75

Fay, T. S. Ulric; or, the Voices. 12mo.....Boards, 75

Farmingdale. A Tale. By Caroline Thomas. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

French's Historical Collections of Louisiana. Part III. 8vo.....Cloth, 1 50

Foote's Africa and the American Flag. 1 vol. 12mo. Illust. Cloth, 1 50

Fullerton, Lady G. Lady Bird. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Garland's Life of John Randolph. 2 vols. in 1. 8vo. Portraits 1 50
Half calf, 2 50
Full calf, 3 00

Gibbes' Documentary History of the American Revolution, 1761, 1782. 1 vol. 8vo. Cloth, 1 50

——— The same. 2d vol. 1764 to 1776. 1 vol. 8vo.....Cloth, 1 50

Ghostly Colloquies. By the Author of "Letters from Egone," &c. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Gil Blas. Translated from the French by Le Sage. Illustrated with over 500 spirited engravings. 1 large vol. 8vo.....Extra cloth, Gilt edges, 3 00
Half calf, 3 50
Full calf, 4 00

Gilfillan, Geo. Gallery of Literary Portraits. Second Series. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Goddard's Gleanings. Some Wheat—Some Chaff. 12mo. Cloth, 1 00

Goethe's Iphigenia in Tauris. A Drama in Five Acts. Translated from the German by C. J. Adler. 12mo.....Boards, 75

Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. 12mo. Illustrated. Cloth, 75
Gilt edges, 1 00

Gore, Mrs. The Dean's Daughter. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Gould's (W. M.) Zephyrs from Italy and Sicily. 12mo. Colored plate, 1 00

Grant's Memoirs of an American Lady. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Griffith's (Mattie) Poems. 12mo.....Cloth, 75
Gilt edges, 1 25

Guizot's History of Civilization. 4 vols. 12mo.....Cloth, 3 50
Half calf, 8 00

——— Democracy in France. 12mo.....Paper, 25

MISCELLANEOUS—Continued.

Gurowski's Russia As It Is. 1 vol. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Hall, B. R. The New Purchase; or, Early Years in the Far West. Illustrated. 12mo. Cloth, 1 25

Harry Muir. A Scottish Story. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Hamilton's Philosophy. Arranged and Edited by O. W. Wight. 1 vol. 8vo.....Cloth, 1 50

———— The Same, in full calf, 3 00

Heartsease; or, The Brother's Wife. By the Author of "The Heir of Redclyffe." 2 vols. 12mo. Cloth, 1 50

Heir of Redclyffe (The). A Tale. 2 vols. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 50

Heloise; or, The Unrevealed Secret. By Talvi. 12mo..... Cloth, 75

Holmes's Tempest and Sunshine; or, Life in Kentucky. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

———— **.The English Orphans.** A Tale. 12mo. Cloth, 75

Home is Home. A Domestic Story. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Home; or, The Ways of the World. By Mrs. Reeves. 1 vol. (In press.).....

Household Mysteries. By the Author of "Light and Darkness." 1 vol. 12mo..... 1 00

Hunt's Pantological System of History. Folio, ...Cloth, 3 00

Iconographic Cyclopædia of Science, Literature, and Art, Systematically Arranged. Illustrated with 500 fine steel plate engravings. 6 vols. Half morocco, 40 00

———— Or in full morocco,..... 50 00

———— Or in separate divisions:—

The Laws of Nature; or, Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics, and Meteorology Illustrated. With an Atlas of twenty-nine steel plates, containing twelve hundred illustrations. 2 vols.....Cloth, 5 00

The Sciences; or, Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology Illustrated. With an Atlas of twenty-four steel plates, containing one thousand illustrations. 2 vols. Cloth, 3 00

The Anatomy of the Human Body; or, Anthropology Illustrated. With an Atlas of twenty-two steel plates, containing six hundred illustrations. 2 vols. Cloth, 3 00

The Countries and Cities of the World; or, Geography Illustrated. Including a Complete German and English Geographical Glossary. With an Atlas of forty-four steel plates, containing Geographical Maps and Plans of Cities. 2 vols.....Cloth, 5 00

The Customs and Costumes of People of Ancient and Modern Times; or, History and Ethnology Illustrated. With an Atlas of eighty-one steel plates, containing fourteen hundred illustrations. 2 vols.....Cloth, 3 00

The Warfare of All Ages; or, Military Sciences Illustrated. With an Atlas of fifty-one steel plates, containing fifteen hundred illustrations. 2 vols...Cloth, 5 00

MISCELLANEOUS—Continued.

The Navigation of All Ages; or, Naval Science Illustrated. With an Atlas of thirty-two steel plates, containing six hundred illustrations. 2 vols ....Cloth, 4 00

The Art of Building in Ancient and Modern Times; or, Architecture Illustrated. With an Atlas of sixty steel plates, containing 1100 illustrations. 2 vols.....Cloth, 6 00

The Religions of Ancient and Modern Times; or, Mythology Illustrated. With an Atlas of thirty steel plates, containing eight hundred illustrations. 2 vols.....Cloth, 4 00

The Fine Arts Illustrated. Being a Complete History of Sculpture, Painting, and the Graphic Arts, including a Theory of the Art of Drawing. With an Atlas of twenty-six steel plates, containing five hundred illustrations. 2 vols. Cloth, 4 00

Technology Illustrated. Being a Series of Treatises on the Construction of Roads, Bridges, Canals, Hydraulic Engines, Flouring and Spinning Mills, and on the Principal Proceedings in Cotton Manufacture, Coining, Mining, Metallurgy, Agriculture, &c. With an Atlas of thirty-five steel plates, containing 1,100 engravings. 2 vols.....Cloth, 4 00

A very few copies only remain of the above. Early orders are necessary to secure them.

---

10. A Tale of the Ancient Fane. By Barton. 12mo. Cloth, 75

Irish (The) Abroad and at Home, at the Court and in the Camp. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Isham's Mud Cabin; or, Character and Tendency of British Institutions. 12mo. Cloth, 1 00

James, Henry. The Nature of Evil, considered in a Letter to the Rev. Edward Beecher, D.D. 1 vol. 16mo. Cloth, 1 00

James, G. P. R. and M. B. Field. Adrien; or, The Clouds of the Mind. 12mo. Cloth, 75

Jameson (Mrs.) Commonplace Book of Thoughts, Memories, and Fancies. 12mo.....Cloth, 75
Half calf extra, 1 75

Johnson, A. B. The Meaning of Words. 12mo.....Cloth. 1 00

Johnston's Chemistry of Common Life. Illustrated with numerous woodcuts. 2 vols. 12mo. Cloth, 2 00
In sheep, 2 25
In half calf, 4 00

Juno Clifford. A Tale. By a Lady. With Illustrations. 12mo. Cloth, 1 25

Kavanagh, Julia. Women of Christianity, Exemplary for Piety and Charity. 12mo. Cloth, 75

——— Nathalie. A Tale. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

——— Madeleine. 12mo. Cloth, 75

——— Daisy Burns. 12mo. Cloth, 1 00

——— Grace Lee. ..Cloth, 1 00

——— Rachel Gray. 12mo. Cloth, 75

——— The same. 6 volumes. Half calf, 10 00

Keats' Poetical Works. 1 vol. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00
Gilt edges, 1 50
Antique or extra morocco, 2 50

MISCELLANEOUS—Continued.

Kirkland (Mrs.) Personal Memoirs of George Washington. 1 vol. 12mo. Illustrated.....(In press.)

Kœppen. Atlas of the Middle Ages. With copious illustrative Text. 4to.....Half bound, 4 50

——— History of the Middle Ages. 2 vols. 12mo. Cloth, 2 00

——— Atlas to do. Cloth, 2 50

Kohlrausch's Complete History of Germany. 8vo. Cloth, 1 50

——— A New Edition. Illustrated.....Extra Binding. 2 50

Lamartine's History of Turkey. Vol. 1. 12mo. Cloth, 1 00

Layard's Nineveh and its Remains. 1 large vol. 8vo., with all the illustrations.....Cloth, 4 00
Half calf, 5 00

——— The Same. 1 vol. 12mo., without the illustrations....Cloth, 1 00

Lee, E. B. Life of Jean Paul F. Richter. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 25

Leger's History of Animal Magnetism. 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Letters from Rome, A. D. 138. By the Author of "Clouds and Sunshine." 12mo.....Cloth, 1 00

Life and Correspondence of Judge Iredell.....(In press.)

Life's Discipline. A Tale of the Annals of Hungary. By Talvi. Author of "Heloise," &c. 12mo.....Cloth, 63

Lindsay. Poems by Walter M. Lindsay. 16mo.....Cloth, 75

Lord, W. W. Poems. 12mo. Boards, 75

Lord, W. W. Christ in Hades. 12mo.....Boards, 75

Macaulay's Essays, Critical and Miscellaneous. Best Edition. 5 vols. small 8vo. Cloth, 3 75
Half calf extra, 8 00
Full calf extra, 10 00

Macintosh, M. J. Two Lives; or, To Seem and To Be. 12mo. Cloth, 75

——— Aunt Kitty's Tales. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

——— Charms & Counter Charms......Cloth, 1 00

——— Evenings at Donaldson Manor. 12mo....Cloth, 75

——— The Lofty and Lowly. 2 vols. 12mo....Cloth, 1 50

The above, in uniform sets, 6 vols., half calf extra,.....10 00

McCormick's Visit to the Camp before Sebastopol. Neatly illustrated. 12mo...Cloth, 1 00

McLee's Series of Alphabets, designed as a Text-Book for Engravers and Painters of Letters. 4to.....Cloth, 2 00

Mahon's (Lord) History of England. Edited by Professor Reed. 2 vols. 8vo..... 4 00

Manzoni. The Betrothed Lovers. 2 vols. 12mo...Cloth, 1 50

Margaret Cecil; or, I Can, Because I Ought. By Cousin Kate. 12mo.....Cloth, 75

Marrying Too Late. By Geo. Wood. Author of "Peter Schlemihl in America," &c., &c. 1 vol.
(In press.)



APPLETONS' PUBLISHING ESTABLISHMENT.

D. APPLETON & CO.,

346 & 348 BROADWAY, NEW YOR

Booksellers, Publishers, & Importers,

RESPECTFULLY invite the attention of Literary and Professional Gentlemen, H
Public Institutions, the Trade, and the Public generally, to their very Extensi
Choice Collection of

STANDARD WORKS,

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN,

Embracing the Best Editions of the Best Authors

THEIR OWN PUBLICATIONS

Comprise some of the most Important Works in the English Language

THEIR SCHOOL-BOOK PUBLICATIONS

COVER EVERY BRANCH OF HUMAN KNOWLEDG

☞ **Catalogues furnished gratis on application to the Publis**

THEY PUBLISH APPLETONS'

RAILWAY AND STEAM NAVIGATION GUIDE

Published Monthly,

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE RAILWAY COMPANIES.

Illustrated with over Sixty Maps. Price 25 cents.



3 2044 019 329 598

This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

Please return promptly.

JAFEB - 3 1997

JAFEB 1 1997